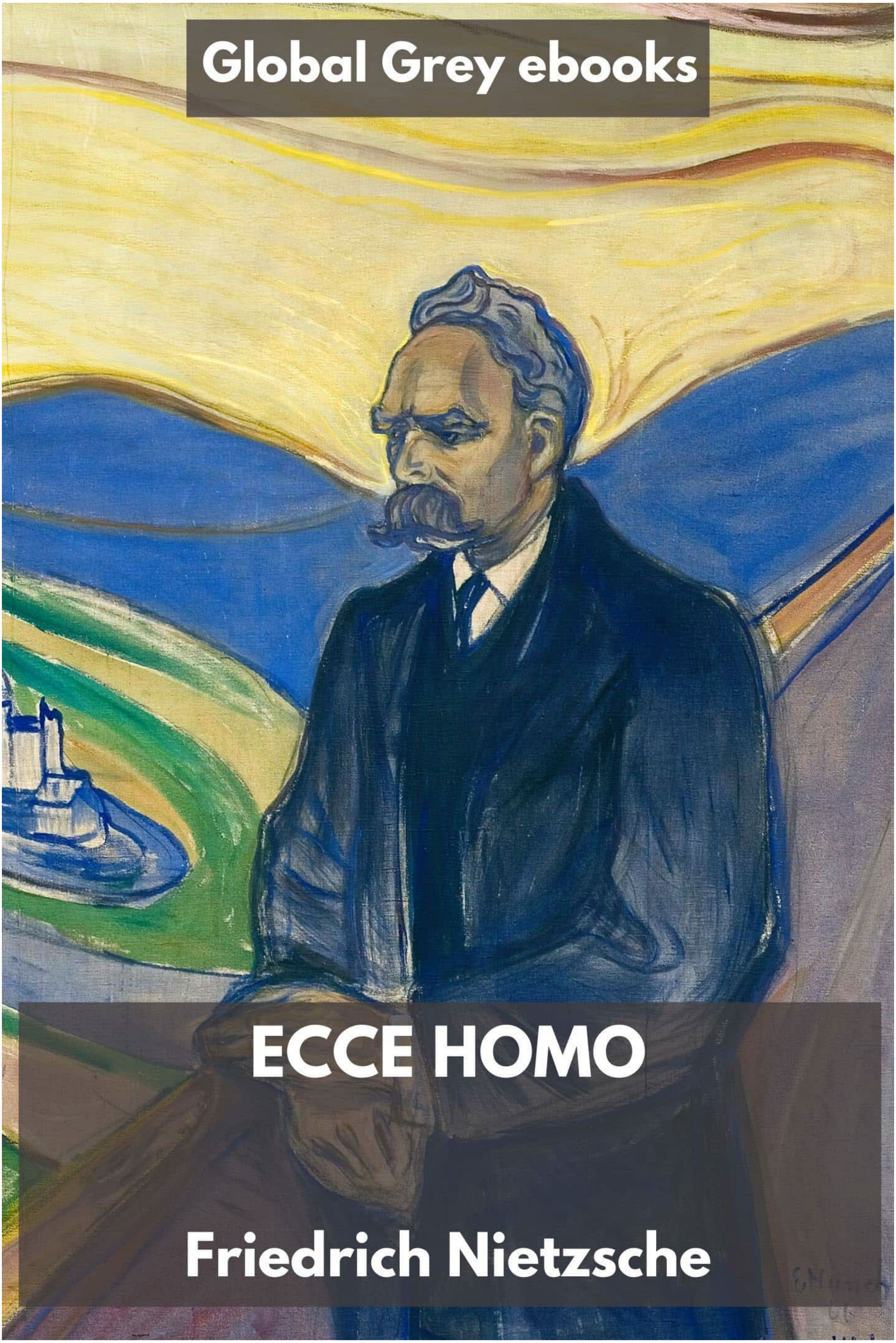


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ECCE HOMO

Friedrich Nietzsche

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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

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Contents

Translator's Introduction

Ecce Homo is the last prose work that Nietzsche wrote. It is true that the pamphlet *Nietzsche contra Wagner* was prepared a month later than the Autobiography; but we cannot consider this pamphlet as anything more than a compilation, seeing that it consists entirely of aphorisms drawn from such previous works as *Joyful Wisdom, Beyond Good and Evil, The Genealogy of Morals,* etc. Coming at the end of a year in which he had produced the *Case of Wagner, The Twilight of the Idols,* and *The Antichrist, Ecce Homo* is not only a coping-stone worthy of the wonderful creations of that year, but also a fitting conclusion to his whole life, in the form of a grand summing up of his character as a man, his purpose as a reformer, and his achievement as a thinker. As if half conscious of his approaching spiritual end, Nietzsche here bids his friends farewell, just in the manner in which, in the *Twilight of the Idols* (Aph. 36, Part ix.), he declares that every one should be able to take leave of his circle of relatives and intimates when his time seems to have come—that is to say, while he is still *himself* while he still knows what he is about, and is able to measure his own life and life in general, and speak of both in a manner which is not vouchsafed to the groaning invalid, to the man lying on his back, decrepit and exhausted, or to the moribund victim of some wasting disease. Nietzsche's spiritual death, like his whole life, was in singular harmony with his doctrine: he died suddenly and proudly,—sword in hand. War, which he—and he alone among all the philosophers of Christendom—had praised so whole-heartedly, at last struck him down in the full vigour of his manhood, and left him a victim on the battlefield—the terrible battlefield of thought, on which there is no quarter, and for which no Geneva Convention has yet been established or even thought of.

To those who know Nietzsche's life-work, no apology will be needed for the form and content of this wonderful work. They will know, at least, that a man either is, or is not, aware of his significance and of the significance of what he has accomplished, and that if he is aware of it, then self-realisation, even of the kind which we find in these pages, is neither morbid nor suspicious, but necessary and inevitable. Such chapter headings as "Why I am so Wise," "Why I am a Fatality," "Why I write such Excellent Books,"—however much they may have disturbed the equanimity, and "objectivity" in particular, of certain Nietzsche biographers, can be regarded as pathological only in a democratic age in which people have lost all sense of graduation and rank and in which the virtues of modesty and humility have to be preached far and wide as a corrective against the vulgar pretensions of thousands of wretched nobodies. For little people can be endured only as modest citizens; or humble Christians. If, however, they demand a like modesty on the part of the truly great; if they raise their voices against Nietzsche's lack of the very virtue they so abundantly possess or pretend to possess, it is time to remind them of Goethe's famous remark: "*Nur Lumpe sind bescheiden*" (Only nobodies are ever modest).

It took Nietzsche barely three weeks to write this story of his life. Begun on the 15th of October 1888, his four-and-fourtieth birthday, it was finished on the 4th of November of the same year, and, but for a few trifling modifications and additions, is just as Nietzsche left it. It was not published in Germany until the year 1908, eight years after Nietzsche's death. In a letter dated the 27th of December 1888, addressed to the musical composer Fuchs, the author declares the object of the work to be to dispose of all discussion, doubt, and inquiry concerning his own personality, in order to leave the public mind free to consider merely "the things for the sake of which he existed" ("*die Dinge, derentwegen ich da bin*"). And, true to his intention, Nietzsche's honesty in these pages is certainly one of the most remarkable

features about them. From the first chapter, in which he frankly acknowledges the decadent elements within him, to the last page, whereon he characterises his mission, his life-task, and his achievement, by means of the one symbol, *Dionysus* versus *Christ,*—everything comes straight from the shoulder, without hesitation, without fear of consequences, and, above all, without concealment. Only in one place does he appear to conceal something, and then he actually leads one to understand that he is doing so. It is in regard to Wagner, the greatest friend of his life. "Who doubts," he says, "that I, old artillery-man that I am, would be able if I liked to point my heavy guns at Wagner?"—But he adds: "Everything decisive in this question I kept to myself—I have loved Wagner" (p. 122).

To point, as many have done, to the proximity of all Nietzsche's autumn work of the year 1888 to his breakdown at the beginning of 1889, and to argue that in all its main features it foretells the catastrophe that is imminent, seems a little too plausible, a little too obvious and simple to require refutation. That Nietzsche really was in a state which in medicine is known as *euphoria*—that is to say, that state of highest well-being and capacity which often precedes a complete breakdown, cannot, I suppose, be questioned; for his style, his penetrating vision, and his vigour, reach their zenith in the works written in this autumn of 1888; but the contention that the matter, the substance, of these works reveals any signs whatsoever of waning mental health, or, as a certain French biographer has it, of an inability to "hold himself and his judgments in check," is best contradicted by the internal evidence itself. To take just a few examples at random, examine the cold and calculating tone of self-analysis in Chapter I. of the present work; consider the reserve and the restraint with which the idea in Aphorism 7 of that chapter is worked out,—not to speak of the restraint and self-mastery in the idea itself, namely:—

"To be one's enemy's equal—this is the first condition of an honourable duel. Where one despises one cannot wage war. Where one commands, where one sees something beneath one, one ought not to wage war. My war tactics can be reduced to four principles: First, I attack only things that are triumphant—if necessary I wait until they become triumphant. Secondly, I attack only those things against which I find no allies, against which I stand alone—against which I compromise nobody but myself.... Thirdly, I never make personal attacks—I use a personality merely as a magnifying-glass, by means of which I render a general, but elusive and scarcely noticeable evil, more apparent.... Fourthly, I attack only those things from which all personal differences are excluded, in which any such thing as a background of disagreeable experiences is lacking."

And now notice the gentleness with which, in Chapter II., Wagner—the supposed mortal enemy, the supposed envied rival to Nietzsche—is treated. Are these the words and the thoughts of a man who Has lost, or who is losing control?

And even if we confine ourselves simply to the substance of this work and put the question—Is it a new Nietzsche or the old Nietzsche that we find in these pages? Is it the old countenance with which we are familiar, or are the features distorted, awry, disfigured? What will the answer be? Obviously there is no new or even deformed Nietzsche here, because he is still faithful to the position which he assumed in *Thus spake Zarathustra,* five years previously, and is perfectly conscious of this fidelity (see p. 141); neither can he be even on the verge of any marked change, because the whole of the third chapter, in which he reviews his life-work, is simply a reiteration and a confirmation of his old points of view, which are here made all the more telling by additional arguments suggested, no doubt, by maturer thought. In fact, if anything at all is new in this work, it is its cool certainty, its severe deliberateness, and its extraordinarily incisive vision, as shown, for instance, in the summing up of the genuine import of the third and fourth essays in the *Thoughts out of Season* (pp. 75-

76, 80, 81, 82), a summing up which a most critical analysis of the essays in question can but verify. Romanticism, idealism, Christianity, are still scorned and despised; another outlook, a nobler, braver, and more earthly outlook, is still upheld and revered; the great yea to life, including all that it contains that is terrible and questionable, is still pronounced in the teeth of pessimists, nihilists, anarchists, Christians, and other decadents; and Germany, “Europe’s flatland,” is still subjected to the most relentless criticism. If there are any signs of change, besides those of mere growth, in this work, they certainly succeed in eluding the most careful search, undertaken with a full knowledge of Nietzsche’s former opinions, and it would be interesting to know precisely where they are found by those writers whom the titles of the chapters, alone, seem so radically to have perturbed.

But the most striking thing of all, the miracle, so to speak, of this autobiography, is the absence from it of that loathing, that suggestion of surfeit, with which a life such as the one Nietzsche had led, would have filled any other man even of power approximate to his own. This anchorite, who, in the last years of his life as a healthy human being, suffered the experience of seeing even his oldest friends, including Rhode, show the most complete indifference to his lot, this wrestler with Fate, for whom recognition, in the persons of Brandes, Taine, and Strindberg, had come all too late, and whom even support, sympathy, and help, arriving as it did at last, through Deussen and from Madame de Salis Marschlins, could no longer cheer or comfort,—this was the man who was able notwithstanding to inscribe the device *amor fati* upon his shield on the very eve of his final collapse as a victim of the unspeakable suffering he had endured.

And this final collapse might easily have been foreseen. Nietzsche’s sensorium, as his autobiography proves, was probably the most delicate instrument ever possessed by a human being; and with this fragile structure—the prerequisite, by the bye, of all genius,—his terrible will compelled him to confront the most profound and most recondite problems. We happen to know from another artist and profound thinker, Benjamin Disraeli, who himself had experienced a dangerous breakdown, what the consequences precisely are of indulging in excessive activity in the sphere of the spirit, more particularly when that spirit is highly organised. Disraeli says in *Contarini Fleming* (Part iv. chap. v.):—

“I have sometimes half believed, although the suspicion is mortifying, that there is only one step between his state who deeply indulges in imaginative meditation, and insanity; for I well remember that at this period of my life, when I indulged in meditation to a degree that would now be impossible, and I hope unnecessary, my senses sometimes appeared to be wandering.”

And artists are the proper judges of artists,—not Oxford Dons, like Dr. Schiller, who, in his imprudent attempt at dealing with something for which his pragmatic hands are not sufficiently delicate, eagerly avails himself of popular help in his article on Nietzsche in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* and implies the hackneyed and wholly exploded belief that Nietzsche’s philosophy is madness in the making. As German philosophies, however, are said to go to Oxford only when they die, we may, perhaps, conclude from this want of appreciation in that quarter, how very much alive Nietzsche’s doctrine still is.

Not that Nietzsche went mad so soon, but that he went mad so late is the wonder of wonders. Considering the extraordinary amount of work he did, the great task of the transvaluation of all values, which he actually accomplished, and the fact that he endured such long years of solitude, which to him, the sensitive artist to whom friends were everything, must have been a terrible hardship, we can only wonder at his great health, and can well believe his sister’s account of the phenomenal longevity and bodily vigour of his ancestors.

No one, however, who is initiated, no one who reads this work with understanding, will be in need of this introductory note of mine; for, to all who know, these pages must speak for themselves. We are no longer in the nineteenth century. We have learned many things since then, and if caution is only one of these things, at least it will prevent us from judging a book such as this one, with all its apparent pontifical pride and surging self-reliance, with undue haste, or with that arrogant assurance with which the ignorance of "the humble" and "the modest" has always confronted everything truly great.

ANTHONY M. LUDOVICI.

Preface

1

As it is my intention within a very short time to confront my fellow-men with the very greatest demand that has ever yet been made upon them, it seems to me *above* all necessary to declare here who and what I am. As a matter of fact, this ought to be pretty well known already, for I have not "held my tongue" about myself. But the disparity which obtains between the greatness of my task and the smallness of my contemporaries, is revealed by the fact that people have neither heard me nor yet seen me. I live on my own self-made credit, and it is probably only a prejudice to suppose that I am alive at all. I do but require to speak to any one of the scholars who come to the Ober-Engadine in the summer in order to convince myself that I am *not* alive.... Under these circumstances, it is a duty—and one against which my customary reserve, and to a still greater degree the pride of my instincts, rebel—to say: *Listen! for I am such and such a person. For Heaven's sake do not confound me with any one else!*

2

I am, for instance, in no wise a bogey man, or moral monster. On the contrary, I am the very opposite in nature to the kind of man that has been honoured hitherto as virtuous. Between ourselves, it seems to me that this is precisely a matter on which I may feel proud. I am a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus, and I would prefer to be even a satyr than a saint. But just read this book! Maybe I have here succeeded in expressing this contrast in a cheerful and at the same time sympathetic manner—maybe this is the only purpose of the present work.

The very last thing I should promise to accomplish would be to "improve" mankind. I do not set up any new idols; may old idols only learn what it costs to have legs of clay. To overthrow idols (idols is the name I give to all ideals) is much more like my business. In proportion as an ideal world has been falsely assumed, reality has been robbed of its value, its meaning, and its truthfulness.... The "true world" and the "apparent world"—in plain English, the fictitious world and reality.... Hitherto the *lie* of the ideal has been the curse of reality; by means of it the very source of mankind's instincts has become mendacious and false; so much so that those values have come to be worshipped which are the exact *opposite* of the ones which would ensure man's prosperity, his future, and his great right to a future.

3

He who knows how to breathe in the air of my writings is conscious that it is the air of the heights, that it is bracing. A man must be built for it, otherwise the chances are that it will chill him. The ice is near, the loneliness is terrible—but how serenely everything lies in the sunshine! how freely one can breathe! how much, one feels, lies beneath one! Philosophy, as I have understood it hitherto, is a voluntary retirement into regions of ice and mountain-peaks—the seeking—out of everything strange and questionable in existence, everything upon which, hitherto, morality has set its ban. Through long experience, derived from such wanderings in forbidden country, I acquired an opinion very different from that which may seem generally desirable, of the causes which hitherto have led to men's moralising and idealising. The secret history of philosophers, the psychology of their great names, was revealed to me. How much truth can a certain mind endure; how much truth can it dare?—these questions became for me ever more and more the actual test of values. Error (the belief

in the ideal) is not blindness; error is cowardice.... Every conquest, every step forward in knowledge, is the outcome of courage, of hardness towards one's self, of cleanliness towards one's self. I do not refute ideals; all I do is to draw on my gloves in their presence.... *Nitimur in vetitum;* with this device my philosophy will one day be victorious; for that which has hitherto been most stringently forbidden is, without exception, Truth.

4

In my lifework, my *Zarathustra* holds a place apart. With it, I gave my fellow-men the greatest gift that has ever been bestowed upon them. This book, the voice of which speaks out across the ages, is not only the loftiest book on earth, literally the book of mountain air,—the whole phenomenon, mankind, lies at an incalculable distance beneath it,—but it is also the deepest book, born of the inmost abundance of truth; an inexhaustible well, into which no pitcher can be lowered without coming up again laden with gold and with goodness. Here it is not a "prophet" who speaks, one of those gruesome hybrids of sickness and Will to Power, whom men call founders of religions. If a man would not do a sad wrong to his wisdom, he must, above all give proper heed to the tones—the halcyonic tones—that fall from the lips of Zarathustra:—

"The most silent words are harbingers of the storm; thoughts that come on dove's feet lead the world.

"The figs fall from the trees; they are good and sweet, and, when they fall, their red skins are rent.

"A north wind am I unto ripe figs.

"Thus, like figs, do these precepts drop down to you, my friends; now drink their juice and their sweet pulp.

"It is autumn all around, and clear sky, and afternoon."

No fanatic speaks to you here; this is not a "sermon"; no faith is demanded in these pages. From out an infinite treasure of light and well of joy, drop by drop, my words fall out—a slow and gentle gait is the cadence of these discourses. Such things can reach only the most elect; it is a rare privilege to be a listener here; not every one who likes can have ears to hear Zarathustra. Is not Zarathustra, because of these things, a *seducer?* ... But what, indeed, does he himself say, when for the first time he goes back to his solitude? Just the reverse of that which any "Sage," "Saint," "Saviour of the world," and other decadent would say.... Not only his words, but he himself is other than they.

"Alone do I now go, my disciples! Get ye also hence, and alone! Thus would I have it.

"Verily, I beseech you: take your leave of me and arm yourselves against Zarathustra! And better still, be ashamed of him! Maybe he hath deceived you.

"The knight of knowledge must be able not only to love his enemies, but also to hate his friends.

"The man who remaineth a pupil requiteth his teacher but ill. And why would ye not pluck at my wreath?

"Ye honour me; but what if your reverence should one day break down? Take heed, lest a statue crush you.

"Ye say ye believe in Zarathustra? But of; what account is Zarathustra? Ye are my believers: but of what account are all believers?

“Ye had not yet sought yourselves when ye found me. Thus do all believers; therefore is all believing worth so little.

“Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only when ye have all denied me will I come back unto you.”

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

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On this perfect day, when everything is ripening, and not only the grapes are getting brown, a ray of sunshine has fallen on my life: I looked behind me, I looked before me, and never have I seen so many good things all at once. Not in vain have I buried my four-and-fortieth year to-day; I had the *right* to bury it—that in it which still had life, has been saved and is immortal. The first book of the *Transvaluation of all Values, The Songs of Zarathustra, The Twilight of the Idols,* my attempt, to philosophise with the hammer—all these things are the gift of this year, and even of its last quarter. *How could I help being thankful to the whole of my life?*

That is why I am now going to tell myself the story of my life.

Why I Am So Wise

1

The happiness of my existence, its unique character perhaps, consists in its fatefulness: to speak in a riddle, as my own father I am already dead, as my own mother I still live and grow old. This double origin, taken as it were from the highest and lowest rungs of the ladder of life, at once a decadent and a beginning, this, if anything, explains that neutrality, that freedom from partisanship in regard to the general problem of existence, which perhaps distinguishes me. To the first indications of ascending or of descending life my nostrils are more sensitive than those of any man that has yet lived. In this domain I am a master to my backbone—I know both sides, for I am both sides. My father died in his six-and-thirtieth year: he was delicate, lovable, and morbid, like one who is preordained to pay simply a flying visit—a gracious reminder of life rather than life itself. In the same year that his life declined mine also declined: in my six-and-thirtieth year I reached the lowest point in my vitality,—I still lived, but my eyes could distinguish nothing that lay three paces away from me. At that time—it was the year 1879—I resigned my professorship at Bâle, lived through the summer like a shadow in St. Moritz, and spent the following winter, the most sunless of my life, like a shadow in Naumburg. This was my lowest ebb. During this period I wrote *The Wanderer and His Shadow.* Without a doubt I was conversant with shadows then. The winter that followed, my first winter in Genoa, brought forth that sweetness and spirituality which is almost inseparable from extreme poverty of blood and muscle, in the shape of *The Dawn of Day,* The perfect lucidity and cheerfulness, the intellectual exuberance even, that this work reflects, coincides, in my case, not only with the most profound physiological weakness, but also with an excess of suffering. In the midst of the agony of a headache which lasted three days, accompanied by violent nausea, I was possessed of most singular dialectical clearness, and in absolutely cold blood I then thought out things, for which, in my more healthy moments, I am not enough of a climber, not sufficiently subtle, not sufficiently cold. My readers perhaps know to what extent I consider dialectic a symptom of decadence, as, for instance, in the most famous of all cases—the case of Socrates. All the morbid disturbances of the intellect, even that semi-stupor which accompanies fever, have, unto this day, remained completely unknown to me; and for my first information concerning their nature and frequency, I was obliged to have recourse to the learned works which have been compiled on the subject. My circulation is slow. No one has ever been able to detect fever in me. A doctor who treated me for some time as a nerve patient finally declared: "No! there is nothing wrong with your nerves, it is simply I who am nervous." It has been absolutely impossible to ascertain any local degeneration in me, nor any organic stomach trouble, however much I may have suffered from profound weakness of the gastric system as the result of general exhaustion. Even my eye trouble, which sometimes approached so parlously near to blindness, was only an effect and not a cause; for, whenever my general vital condition improved, my power of vision also increased. Having admitted all this, do I need to say that I am experienced in questions of decadence? I know them inside and out. Even that filigree art of prehension and comprehension in general, that feeling for delicate shades of difference, that psychology of "seeing through brick walls," and whatever else I may be able to do, was first learnt then, and is the specific gift of that period during which everything in me was subtilised,—observation itself, together with all the organs of observation. To look upon healthier concepts and values from the standpoint of the sick, and conversely to look down upon the secret work of the instincts of decadence from the standpoint of him who is laden and self-reliant with the richness of life—this has been my longest exercise, my principal

experience. If in anything at all, it was in this that I became a master. To-day my hand knows the trick, I now have the knack of reversing perspectives: the first reason perhaps why a *Transvaluation of all Values* has been possible to me alone.

2

For, apart from the fact that I am a decadent, I am also the reverse of such a creature. Among other things my proof of this is, that I always instinctively select the proper remedy when my spiritual or bodily health is low; whereas the decadent, as such, invariably chooses those remedies which are bad for him. As a whole I was sound, but in certain details I was a decadent. That energy with which I sentenced myself to absolute solitude, and to a severance from all those conditions in life to which I had grown accustomed; my discipline of myself, and my refusal to allow myself to be pampered, to be tended hand and foot, and to be doctored—all this betrays the absolute certainty of my instincts respecting what at that time was most needful to me. I placed myself in my own hands, I restored myself to health: the first condition of success in such an undertaking, as every physiologist will admit, is that at bottom a man should be sound. An intrinsically morbid nature cannot become healthy. On the other hand, to an intrinsically sound nature, illness may even constitute a powerful stimulus to life, to a surplus of life. It is in this light that I now regard the long period of illness that I endured: it seemed as if I had discovered life afresh, my own self included. I tasted all good things and even trifles in a way in which it was not easy for others to taste them—out of my Will to Health and to Life I made my philosophy.... For this should be thoroughly understood; it was during those years in which my vitality reached its lowest point that I ceased from being a pessimist: the instinct of self-recovery forbade my holding to a philosophy of poverty and desperation. Now, by what signs are Nature's lucky strokes recognised among men? They are recognised by the fact that any such lucky stroke gladdens our senses; that he is carved from one integral block, which is hard, sweet, and fragrant as well. He enjoys that only which is good for him; his pleasure, his desire, ceases when the limits of that which is good for him are overstepped. He divines remedies for injuries; he knows how to turn serious accidents to his own advantage; that which does not kill him makes him stronger. He instinctively gathers his material from all he sees, hears, and experiences. He is a selective principle; he rejects much. He is always in his own company, whether his intercourse be with books, with men, or with natural scenery; he honours the things he chooses, the things he acknowledges, the things he trusts. He reacts slowly to all kinds of stimuli, with that tardiness which long caution and deliberate pride have bred in him—he tests the approaching stimulus; he would not dream of meeting it half-way. He believes neither in "ill-luck" nor "guilt"; he can digest himself and others; he knows how to forget—he is strong enough to make everything turn to his own advantage.

Lo then! I am the very reverse of a decadent, for he whom I have just described is none other than myself.

3

This double thread of experiences, this means of access to two worlds that seem so far asunder, finds in every detail its counterpart in my own nature—I am my own complement: I have a "second" sight, as well as a first. And perhaps I also have a third sight. By the very nature of my origin I was allowed an outlook beyond all merely local, merely national and limited horizons; it required no effort on my part to be a "good European." On the other hand, I am perhaps more German than modern Germans—mere Imperial Germans—can hope to be,—I, the last anti-political German. Be this as it may, my ancestors were Polish noblemen: it is owing to them that I have so much race instinct in my blood—who knows? perhaps even

the *liberum veto*[1] When I think of the number of times in my travels that I have been accosted as a Pole, even by Poles themselves, and how seldom I have been taken for a German, it seems to me as if I belonged to those only who have a sprinkling of German in them. But my mother, Franziska Oehler, is at any rate something very German; as is also my paternal grandmother, Erdmuthe Krause. The latter spent the whole of her youth in good old Weimar, not without coming into contact with Goethe's circle. Her brother, Krause, the Professor of Theology in Königsberg, was called to the post of General Superintendent at Weimar after Herder's death. It is not unlikely that her mother, my great grandmother, is mentioned in young Goethe's diary under the name of "Muthgen." She married twice, and her second husband was Superintendent Nietzsche of Eilenburg. In 1813, the year of the great war, when Napoleon with his general staff entered Eilenburg on the 10th of October, she gave birth to a son. As a daughter of Saxony she was a great admirer of Napoleon, and maybe I am so still. My father, born in 1813, died in 1849. Previous to taking over the pastorship of the parish of Röcken, not far from Lützen, he lived for some years at the Castle of Altenburg, where he had charge of the education of the four princesses. His pupils are the Queen of Hanover, the Grand-Duchess Constantine, the Grand-Duchess of Oldenburg, and the Princess Theresa of Saxe-Altenburg. He was full of loyal respect for the Prussian King, Frederick William the Fourth, from whom he obtained his living at Röcken; the events of 1848 saddened him extremely. As I was born on the 15 th of October, the birthday of the king above mentioned, I naturally received the Hohenzollern names of Frederick William. There was at all events one advantage in the choice of this day: my birthday throughout the whole of my childhood was a day of public rejoicing. I regard it as a great privilege to have had such a father: it even seems to me that this embraces all that I can claim in the matter of privileges—life, the great yea to life, excepted. What I owe to him above all is this, that I do not need any special intention, but merely a little patience, in order involuntarily to enter a world of higher and more delicate things. There I am at home, there alone does my inmost passion become free. The fact that I had to pay for this privilege almost with my life, certainly does not make it a bad bargain. In order to understand even a little of *my Zarathustra,* perhaps a man must be situated and constituted very much as I am myself—with one foot beyond the realm of the living.

4

I have never understood the art of arousing ill-feeling against myself,—this is also something for which I have to thank my incomparable father,—even when it seemed to me highly desirable to do so. However un-Christian it may seem, I do not even bear any ill-feeling towards myself. Turn my life about as you may, you will find but seldom—perhaps indeed only once—any trace of some one's having shown me ill-will. You might perhaps discover, however, too many traces of *goodwill....* My experiences even with those on whom every other man has burnt his fingers, speak without exception in their favour; I tame every bear, I can make even clowns behave decently. During the seven years in which I taught Greek to the sixth form of the College at Bâle, I never had occasion to administer a punishment; the laziest youths were diligent in my class. The unexpected has always found me equal to it; I must be unprepared in order to keep my self-command. Whatever the instrument was, even if it were as out of tune as the instrument "man" can possibly be,—it was only when I was ill that I could not succeed in making it express something that was worth hearing. And how often have I not been told by the "instruments" themselves, that they had never before heard their voices express such beautiful things.... This was said to me most delightfully perhaps by that young fellow Heinrich von Stein, who died at such an unpardonably early age, and who,

[1] The right which every Polish deputy, whether a great or an inferior nobleman, possessed of forbidding the passing of any measure by the Diet, was called in Poland the *liberum veto* (in Polish *nie pozwalam*), and brought all legislation to a standstill.—TR.

after having considerately asked leave to do so, once appeared in Sils-Maria for a three days' sojourn, telling everybody there that it was *not* for the Engadine that he had come. This excellent person, who with all the impetuous simplicity of a young Prussian nobleman, had waded deep into the swamp of Wagnerism (and into that of Dübringism[2] into the bargain!), seemed almost transformed during these three days by a hurricane of freedom, like one who has been suddenly raised to his full height and given wings. Again and again I said to him that this was all owing to the splendid air; everybody felt the same,—one could not stand 6000 feet above Bayreuth for nothing,—but he would not believe me.... Be this as it may, if I have been the victim of many a small or even great offence, it was not "will," and least of all ill-will that actuated the offenders; but rather, as I have already suggested, it was goodwill, the cause of no small amount of mischief in f my life, about which I had to complain. *My* experience gave me a right to feel suspicious in regard to all so-called "unselfish" instincts, in regard to the whole of "neighbourly love" which is ever ready and waiting with deeds or with advice. To me it seems that these instincts are a sign of weakness, they are an example of the inability to withstand a stimulus—it is only among decadents that this *pity* is called a virtue. What I reproach the pitiful with is, that they are too ready to forget shame, reverence, and the delicacy of feeling which knows how to keep at a distance; they do not remember that this gushing pity stinks of the mob, and that it is next of kin to bad manners—that pitiful hands may be thrust with results fatally destructive into a great destiny, into a lonely and wounded retirement, and into the privileges with which great guilt endows one. The overcoming of pity I reckon among the noble virtues; In the "Temptation of Zarathustra" I have imagined a case, in which a great cry of distress reaches his ears, in which pity swoops down upon him like a last sin, and would make him break faith with himself. To remain one's own master in such circumstances, to keep the sublimity of one's mission pure in such cases,—pure from the many ignoble and more short-sighted impulses which come into play in so-called unselfish actions,—this is the rub, the last test perhaps which a Zarathustra has to undergo—the actual proof of his power.

5

In yet another respect I am no more than my father over again, and as it were the continuation of his life after an all-too-early death. Like every man who has never been able to meet his equal, and unto whom the concept "retaliation" is just as incomprehensible as the notion of "equal rights," I have forbidden myself the use of any sort of measure of security or protection—and also, of course, of defence and "justification"—in all cases in which I have been made the victim either of trifling or even *very great* foolishness. My form of retaliation consists in this: as soon as possible to set a piece of cleverness at the heels of an act of stupidity; by this means perhaps it may still be possible to overtake it. To speak in a parable: I dispatch a pot of jam in order to get rid of a bitter experience.... Let anybody only give me offence, I shall "retaliate," he can be quite sure of that: before long I discover an opportunity of expressing my thanks to the "offender" (among other things even for the offence)—or of *asking* him for something, which can be more courteous even than giving. It also seems to me that the rudest word, the rudest letter, is more good-natured, more straightforward, than silence. Those—who keep silent are almost always lacking in subtlety and refinement of heart; silence is an objection, to swallow a grievance must necessarily produce a bad temper—it even upsets the stomach. All silent people are dyspeptic. You perceive that I should not like to see rudeness undervalued; it is by far the most *humane* form of contradiction, and, in the midst of modern effeminacy, it is one of our first virtues; If one is sufficiently rich for it, it may even be a joy to be wrong. If a god were to descend to this

[2] Eugen Dübring is a philosopher and political economist whose general doctrine might be characterised as a sort of abstract Materialism with an optimistic colouring.—TR.

earth, he would have to do nothing but wrong—to take *guilt* not punishment, on one's shoulders, is the first proof of divinity.

6

Freedom from resentment and the understanding of the nature of resentment—who knows how very much after all I am indebted to my long illness for these two things? The problem is not exactly simple: a man must have experienced both through his strength and through his weakness, If illness and weakness are to be charged with anything at all, it is with the fact that when they prevail, the very instinct of recovery, which is the instinct of defence and of war in man, becomes decayed. He knows not how to get rid of anything, how to come to terms with anything, and how to cast anything behind him. Everything wounds him. People and things draw importunately near, all experiences strike deep, memory is a gathering wound. To be ill is a sort of resentment in itself. Against this resentment the invalid has only one great remedy—I call it *Russian fatalism,* that fatalism which is free from revolt, and with which the Russian soldier, to whom a campaign proves unbearable, ultimately lays himself down in the snow. To accept nothing more, to undertake nothing more, to absorb nothing more—to cease entirely from reacting.... The tremendous sagacity of this fatalism, which does not always imply merely the courage for death, but which in the most dangerous cases may actually constitute a self-preservative measure, amounts to a reduction of activity in the vital functions, the slackening down of which is like a sort of will to hibernate. A few steps farther in this direction we find the fakir, who will sleep for weeks in a tomb.... Owing to the fact that one would be used up too quickly if one reacted, one no longer reacts at all: this is the principle. And nothing on earth consumes a man more quickly than the passion of resentment. Mortification, morbid susceptibility, the inability to wreak revenge, the desire and thirst for revenge, the concoction of every sort of poison—this is surely the most injurious manner of reacting which could possibly be conceived by exhausted men. It involves a rapid wasting away of nervous energy, an abnormal increase of detrimental secretions, as, for instance, that of bile into the stomach. To the sick man resentment ought to be more strictly forbidden than anything else—it is *his* special danger: unfortunately, however, it is also his most natural propensity. This was fully grasped by that profound physiologist Buddha. His "religion," which it would be better to call a system of hygiene, in order to avoid confounding it with a creed so wretched as Christianity, depended for its effect upon the triumph over resentment: to make the soul free therefrom was considered the first step towards recovery. "Not through hostility is hostility put to flight; through friendship does hostility end": this stands at the beginning of Buddha's teaching—this is not a precept of morality, but of physiology. Resentment born of weakness is not more deleterious to anybody than it is to the weak man himself—conversely, in the case of that man whose nature is fundamentally a rich one, resentment is a superfluous feeling, a feeling to remain master of which is almost a proof of riches. Those of my readers who know the earnestness-with which my philosophy wages war against the feelings of revenge and rancour, even to the extent of attacking the doctrine of "free will" (my conflict with Christianity is only a particular instance of it), will understand why I wish to focus attention upon my own personal attitude and the certainty of my practical instincts precisely in this matter. In my moments of decadence I forbade myself the indulgence of the above feelings, because they were harmful; as soon as my life recovered enough riches and pride, however, I regarded them again as forbidden, but this time because they were *beneath* me. That "Russian fatalism" of which I have spoken manifested itself in me in such a way that for years I held tenaciously to almost insufferable conditions, places, habitations, and companions, once chance had placed them on my path—it was better than changing them, than feeling that they could be changed, than revolting against them.... He who stirred me from this fatalism, he who violently tried to

shake me into consciousness, seemed to me then a mortal enemy—in point of fact, there was danger of death each time this was done. To regard one's self as a destiny, not to wish one's self "different"—this, in such circumstances, is sagacity, itself.

7

War, on the other hand, is something different. At heart I am a warrior. Attacking belongs to my instincts. To *be able to be* an enemy, to *be* an enemy—maybe these things presuppose a strong nature; in any case all strong natures involve these things. Such natures need resistance, consequently they go in search of obstacles: the pathos of aggression belongs of necessity to strength as much as the feelings of revenge and of rancour belong to weakness. Woman, for instance, is revengeful; her weakness involves this passion, just as it involves her susceptibility in the presence of other people's suffering. The strength of the aggressor can be measured by the opposition which he needs; every increase of growth betrays itself by a seeking out of more formidable opponents—or problems: for a philosopher who is combative challenges even problems to a duel. The task is not to overcome opponents in general, but only those opponents against whom one has to summon all one's strength, one's skill, and one's swordsmanship—in fact, opponents who are one's equals.... To be one's enemy's equal—this is the first condition of an honourable duel. Where one despises, one cannot wage war. Where one commands, where one sees something *beneath* one, one *ought* not to wage war. My war tactics can be reduced to four principles A First, I attack only things that are triumphant—if necessary I wait until they become triumphant. Secondly, I attack only those things against which I find no allies, against which I stand alone—against which I compromise nobody but myself.... I have not yet taken one single step before the public eye, which did not compromise me: that is *my* criterion of a proper mode of action. Thirdly, I never make personal attacks—I use a personality merely as a magnifying-glass, by means of which I render a general, but elusive and scarcely noticeable evil, more apparent. In this way I attacked David Strauss, or rather the success given to a senile book by the cultured classes of Germany—by this means I caught German culture red-handed. In this way I attacked Wagner, or rather the falsity or mongrel instincts of our "culture" which confounds the super-refined with the strong, and the effete with the great. Fourthly, I attack only those things from which all personal differences are excluded, in which any such thing as a background of disagreeable experiences is lacking. On the contrary, attacking is to me a proof of goodwill and, in certain circumstances, of gratitude. By means of it, I do honour to a thing, I distinguish a thing; whether I associate my name with that of an institution or a person, by being *against* or *for* either, is all the same to me. If I wage war against Christianity, I feel justified in doing so, because in that quarter I have met with no fatal experiences and difficulties—the most earnest Christians have always been kindly disposed to me. I, personally, the most essential opponent of Christianity, am far from holding the individual responsible for what is the fatality of long ages.

May I be allowed to hazard a suggestion concerning one last trait in my character, which in my intercourse with other men has led me into some difficulties? I am gifted with a sense of cleanliness the keenness of which is phenomenal; so much so, that I can ascertain physiologically—that is to say, smell—the proximity, nay, the inmost core, the "entrails" of every human soul.... This sensitiveness of mine is furnished with psychological antennæ, wherewith I feel and grasp every secret: the quality of concealed filth lying at the base of many a human character which may be the inevitable outcome of base blood, and which education may have veneered, is revealed to me at the first glance. If my observation has been correct, such people, whom my sense of cleanliness rejects, also become conscious, on their part, of the cautiousness to which my loathing prompts me: and this does not make them any more fragrant.... In keeping with a custom which I have long observed,—pure habits and

honesty towards myself are among the first conditions of my existence, I would die in unclean surroundings,—I swim, bathe, and splash about, as it were, incessantly in water, in any kind of perfectly transparent and shining element. That is why my relations with my fellows try my patience to no small extent; my humanity does not consist in the fact that I understand the feelings of my fellows, but that I can endure to understand.... My humanity is a perpetual process of self-mastery. But I need solitude—that is to say, recovery, return to myself, the breathing of free, crisp, bracing air.... The whole of my *Zarathustra* is a dithyramb in honour of solitude, or, if I have been understood, in honour of purity. Thank Heaven, it is not in honour of "pure foolery"![3] He who has an eye for colour will call him a diamond. The loathing of mankind, of the rabble, was always my greatest danger.... Would you hearken to the words spoken by Zarathustra concerning deliverance from loathing?

"What forsooth hath come unto me? How did I deliver myself from loathing? Who hath made mine eye younger? How did I soar to the height, where there are no more rabble sitting about the well?

"Did my very loathing forge me wings and the strength to scent fountains afar off? Verily to the loftiest heights did I need to fly, to find once more the spring of joyfulness.

"Oh, I found it, my brethren! Up here, on the loftiest height, the spring of joyfulness gusheth forth for me. And there is a life at the well of which no rabble can drink with you.

"Almost too fiercely dost thou rush, for me, thou spring of joyfulness! And ofttimes dost thou empty the pitcher again in trying to fill it.

"And yet must I learn to draw near thee more humbly. Far too eagerly doth my heart jump to meet thee.

"My heart, whereon my summer burneth, my short, hot, melancholy, over-blessed summer: how my summer heart yearneth for thy coolness!

"Farewell, the lingering affliction of my spring! Past is the wickedness of my snowflakes in June! Summer have I become entirely, and summer noontide!

"A summer in the loftiest heights, with cold springs and blessed stillness: oh come, my friends, that the stillness may wax even more blessed!

"For this is our height and our home: too high and steep is our dwelling for all the unclean and their appetites.

"Do but cast your pure eyes into the well of my joyfulness, my friends! How could it thus become muddy! It will laugh back at you with its purity.

"On the tree called Future do we build our nest: eagles shall bring food in their beaks unto us lonely ones!

"Verily not the food whereof the unclean might partake. They would think they ate fire and would burn their mouths!

"Verily, no abodes for the unclean do we here hold in readiness! To their bodies our happiness would seem an ice-cavern, and to their spirits also!

"And like strong winds will we live above them, neighbours to the eagles, companions of the snow, and playmates of the sun: thus do strong winds live.

[3] This, of course, is a reference to Wagner's *Parsifal.* See my note on p. 96 of *The Will to Power* vol. i.—TR.

“And like a wind shall I one day blow amidst them, and take away their soul’s breath with my spirit: thus my future willeth it.

“Verily, a strong wind is Zarathustra to all low lands; and this is his counsel to his foes and to all those who spit and spew: ‘Beware of spitting against the wind!’”

Why I Am So Clever

1

Why do I know more things than other people? Why, in fact, am I so clever? I have never pondered over questions that are not questions. I have never squandered my strength. Of actual religious difficulties, for instance, I have no experience. I have never known what it is to feel "sinful." In the same way I completely lack any reliable criterion for ascertaining what constitutes a prick of conscience: from all accounts a prick of conscience does not seem to be a very estimable thing.... Once it was done I should hate to leave an action of mine in the lurch; I should prefer completely to omit the evil outcome, the consequences, from the problem concerning the value of an action. In the face of evil consequences one is too ready to lose the proper standpoint from which one's deed ought to be considered. A prick of conscience strikes me as a sort of "evil eye." Something that has failed should be honoured all the more jealously, precisely because it has failed—this is much more in keeping with my morality.—"God," "the immortality of the soul," "salvation," a "beyond"—to all these notions, even as a child, I never paid any attention whatsoever, nor did I waste any time upon them,—maybe I was never *naif* enough for that?—I am quite unacquainted with atheism as a result, and still less as an event in my life: in me it is inborn, instinctive. I am too inquisitive, too incredulous, too high spirited, to be satisfied with such a palpably clumsy solution of things. God is a too palpably clumsy solution of things; a solution which shows a lack of delicacy towards us thinkers—at bottom He is really no more than a coarse and rude *prohibition* of us: ye shall not think!... I am much more interested in another question,—a question upon which the "salvation of humanity" depends to a far greater degree than it does upon any piece of theological curiosity: I refer to nutrition. For ordinary purposes, it may be formulated as follows: "How precisely must *thou* feed thyself in order to attain to thy maximum of power, or *virtù* in the Renaissance style,—of virtue free from moralic acid?" My experiences in regard to this matter have been as bad as they possibly could be; I am surprised that I set myself this question so late in life, and that it took me so long to draw "rational" conclusions from my experiences. Only the absolute worth-*1* lessness of German culture—its "idealism"—can to some extent explain how it was that precisely in this matter I was so backward that my ignorance was almost saintly. This "culture," which from first to last teaches one to lose sight of actual things and to hunt after thoroughly problematic and so-called ideal aims, as, for instance, "classical culture"—as if it were not hopeless from the start to try to unite "classical" and "German" in one concept. It is even a little comical—try and imagine a "classically cultured" citizen of Leipzig!—Indeed, I can say, that up to a very mature age, my food was entirely bad—expressed morally, it was "impersonal," "selfless," "altruistic," to the glory of cooks and all other fellow-Christians. It was through the cooking in vogue at Leipzig, for instance, together with my first study of Schopenhauer (1865), that I earnestly renounced my "Will to Live." To spoil one's stomach by absorbing insufficient nourishment—this problem seemed to my mind solved with admirable felicity by the above-mentioned cookery. (It is said that in the year 1866 changes were introduced into this department.) But as to German cookery in general—what has it not got on its conscience! Soup *before* the meal (still called *alla tedesca* in the Venetian cookery books of the sixteenth century); meat boiled to shreds, vegetables cooked with fat and flour; the degeneration of pastries into paper-weights! And, if you add thereto the absolutely bestial post-prandial drinking habits of the *ancients,* and not alone of the ancient Germans, you will understand where German intellect took its origin—that is to say, in sadly disordered intestines.... German intellect is indigestion; it can assimilate nothing. But even English diet, which in

comparison with German, and indeed with French alimentation, seems to me to constitute a "return to Nature,"—that is to say, to cannibalism,—is profoundly opposed to my own instincts. It seems to me to give the intellect heavy feet, in fact, Englishwomen's feet.... The best cooking is that of Piedmont. Alcoholic drinks do not agree with me; a single glass of wine or beer a day is amply sufficient to turn life into a valley of tears for me;—in Munich live my antipodes. Although I admit that this knowledge came to me somewhat late, it already formed part of my experience even as a child. As a boy I believed that the drinking of wine and the smoking of tobacco were at first but the vanities of youths, and later merely bad habits. Maybe the poor wine of Naumburg was partly responsible for this poor opinion of wine in general. In order to believe that wine was exhilarating, I should have had to be a Christian—in other words, I should have had to believe in what, to my mind, is an absurdity. Strange to say, whereas small quantities of alcohol, taken with plenty of water, succeed in making me feel out of sorts, large quantities turn me almost into a rollicking tar. Even as a boy I showed my bravado in this respect. To compose a long Latin essay in one night, to revise and recopy it, to aspire with my pen to emulating the exactitude and the terseness of my model, Sallust, and to pour a few very strong grogs over it all—this mode of procedure, while I was a pupil at the venerable old school of Pforta, was not in the least out of keeping with my physiology, nor perhaps with that of Sallust, however much it may have been alien to dignified Pforta. Later on, towards the middle of my life, I grew more and more opposed to alcoholic drinks: I, an opponent of vegetarianism, who have experienced what vegetarianism is,—just as Wagner, who converted me back to meat, experienced it,—cannot with sufficient earnestness advise all more *spiritual* natures to abstain absolutely from alcohol. Water answers the purpose.... I have a predilection in favour of those places where in all directions one has opportunities of drinking from running brooks (Nice, Turin, Sils). *In vino Veritas*: it seems that here once more I am at variance with the rest of the world about the concept "Truth"—with me spirit moves on the face of the waters.... Here are a few more indications as to my morality. A heavy meal is digested more easily than an inadequate one. The first principle of a good digestion is that the stomach should become active as a whole. A man ought, therefore, to know the size of his stomach. For the same reasons all those interminable meals, which I call interrupted sacrificial feasts, and which are to be had at any table d'hôte, are strongly to be deprecated. Nothing should be eaten between meals, coffee should be given up—coffee makes one gloomy. Tea is beneficial only in the morning. It should be taken in small quantities, but very strong. It may be very harmful, and indispose you for the whole day, if it be taken the least bit too weak. Everybody has his own standard in this matter, often between the narrowest and most delicate limits. In an enervating climate tea is not a good beverage with which to start the day: an hour before taking it an excellent thing is to drink a cup of thick cocoa, feed from oil. Remain seated as little as possible, put no trust in any thought that is not born in the open, to the accompaniment of free bodily motion—nor in one in which even the muscles do not celebrate a feast. All prejudices take their origin in the intestines. A sedentary life, as I have already said elsewhere, is the real sin against the Holy Spirit.

2.

To the question of nutrition, that of locality and climate is next of kin. Nobody is so constituted as to be able to live everywhere and anywhere; and he who has great duties to perform, which lay claim to all his strength, has, in this respect, a very limited choice. The influence of climate upon the bodily functions, affecting their acceleration or retardation, extends so far, that a blunder in the choice of locality and climate is able not only to alienate a man from his actual duty, but also to withhold it from him altogether, so that he never even comes face to face with it. Animal vigour never acquires enough strength in him in order to

reach that pitch of artistic freedom which makes his own soul whisper to him: I, alone, can do that.... Ever so slight a tendency to laziness in the intestines, once it has become a habit, is quite sufficient to make something mediocre, something "German" out of a genius; the climate of Germany, alone, is enough to discourage the strongest and most heroically disposed intestines. The tempo of the body's functions is closely bound up with the agility or the clumsiness of the spirit's feet; spirit itself is indeed only a form of these organic functions. Let anybody make a list of the places in which men of great intellect have been found, and are still found; where wit, subtlety, and malice constitute happiness; where genius is almost necessarily at home: all of them rejoice in exceptionally dry air. Paris, Provence, Florence, Jerusalem, Athens—these names prove something, namely: that genius is conditioned by dry air, by a pure sky—that is to say, by rapid organic functions, by the constant and ever-present possibility of procuring for one's self great and even enormous quantities of strength. I have a certain case in mind in which a man of remarkable intellect and independent spirit became a narrow, craven specialist and a grumpy old crank, simply owing to a lack of subtlety in his instinct for climate. And I myself might have been an example of the same thing, if illness had not compelled me to reason, and to reflect upon reason realistically. Now that I have learnt through long practice to read the effects of climatic and meteorological influences, from my own body, as though from a very delicate and reliable instrument, and that I am able to calculate the change in degrees of atmospheric moisture by means of physiological observations upon myself, even on so short a journey as that from Turin to Milan; I think with horror of the ghastly fact that my whole life, until the last ten years,—the most perilous years,—has always been spent in the wrong, and what to me ought to have been the most forbidden, places. Naumburg, Pforta, Thuringia in general, Leipzig, Bâle, Venice—so many ill-starred places for a constitution like mine. If I cannot recall one single happy reminiscence of my childhood and youth, it is nonsense to suppose that so-called "moral" causes could account for this—as, for instance, the incontestable fact that I lacked companions that could have satisfied me; for this fact is the same to-day as it ever was, and it does not prevent me from being cheerful and brave. But it was ignorance in physiological matters—that confounded "Idealism"—that was the real curse of my life. This was the superfluous and foolish element in my existence; something from which nothing could spring, and for which there can be no settlement and no compensation. As the outcome of this "Idealism" I regard all the blunders, the great aberrations of instinct, and the "modest specialisations" which drew me aside from the task of my life; as, for instance, the fact that I became a philologist—why not at least a medical man or anything else which might have opened my eyes? My days at Bâle, the whole of my intellectual routine, including my daily time-table, was an absolutely senseless abuse of extraordinary powers, without the slightest compensation for the strength that I spent, without even a thought of what I was squandering and how its place might be filled. I lacked all subtlety in egoism, all the fostering care of an imperative instinct; I was in a state in which one is ready to regard one's self as anybody's equal, a state of "disinterestedness," a forgetting of one's distance from others—something, in short, for which I can never forgive myself. When I had well-nigh reached the end of my tether, simply because I had almost reached my end, I began to reflect upon the fundamental absurdity of my life— "Idealism." It was *illness* that first brought me to reason.

3

After the choice of nutrition, the choice of climate and locality, the third matter concerning which one must not on any account make a blunder, is the choice of the manner in which one *recuperates one's strength.* Here, again, according to the extent to which a spirit is *sui generis,* the limits of that which he can allow himself—in other words, the limits of that which is beneficial to him—become more and more confined. As far as I in particular am

concerned, *reading* in general belongs to my means of recuperation; consequently it belongs to that which rids me of myself, to that which enables me to wander in strange sciences and strange souls—to that, in fact, about which I am no longer in earnest. Indeed, it is while reading that I recover from *my* earnestness. During the time that I am deeply absorbed in my work, no books are found within my reach; it would never occur to me to allow any one to speak or even to think in my presence. For that is what reading would mean.... Has any one ever actually noticed, that, during the period of profound tension to which the state of pregnancy condemns not only the mind, but also, at bottom, the whole organism, accident and every kind of external stimulus acts too acutely and strikes too deep? Accident and external stimuli must, as far as possible, be avoided: a sort of walling-of-one's-self-in is one of the primary instinctive precautions of spiritual pregnancy. Shall I allow a strange thought to steal secretly over the wall? For that is what reading would mean.... The periods of work and fruit-fulness are followed by periods of recuperation: come hither, ye delightful, intellectual, intelligent books! Shall I read German books?... I must go back six months to catch myself with a book in my hand. What was it? An excellent study by Victor Brochard upon the Greek sceptics, in which my Laertiana[4] was used to advantage. The sceptics!—the only *honourable* types among that double-faced and sometimes quintuple-faced throng, the philosophers!.... Otherwise I almost always take refuge in the same books: altogether their number is small; they are books which are precisely my proper fare. It is not perhaps in my nature to read much, and of all sorts: a library makes me ill. Neither is it my nature to love much or many kinds of things. Suspicion or even hostility towards new books is much more akin to my instinctive feeling than "toleration," *largeur de cœur,* and other forms of "neighbour-love." ... It is to a small number of old French authors, that I always return again and again; I believe only in French culture, and regard everything else in Europe which calls itself "culture" as a misunderstanding. I do not even take the German kind into consideration.... The few instances of higher culture with which I have met in Germany were all French in their origin. The most striking example of this was Madame Cosima Wagner, by far the most decisive voice in matters of taste that I have ever heard. If I do not read, but literally love Pascal? as the most instinctive sacrifice to Christianity, killing himself inch by inch, first bodily, then spiritually, according to the terrible consistency of this most appalling form of inhuman cruelty; if I have something of Montaigne's mischievousness in my soul, and—who knows?—perhaps also in my body; if my artist's taste endeavours to defend the names of Molière, Corneille, and Racine, and not without bitterness, against such a wild genius as Shakespeare—all this does not prevent me from regarding even the latter-day Frenchmen also as charming companions. I can think of absolutely no century in history, in which a netful of more inquisitive and at the same time more subtle psychologists could be drawn up together than in the Paris of the present day. Let me mention a few at random—for their number is by no means small—Paul Bourget, Pierre Loti, Gyp, Meilhac, Anatole France, Jules Lemaitre; or, to point to one of strong race, a genuine Latin, of whom I am particularly fond, Guy de Maupassant. Between ourselves, I prefer this generation even to its masters, all of whom were corrupted by German philosophy (Taine, for instance, by Hegel, whom he has to thank for his misunderstanding of great men and great periods). Wherever Germany extends her sway, she *ruins* culture. It was the war which first saved the spirit of

[4] Nietzsche, as is well known, devoted much time when a student at Leipzig to the study of three Greek philosophers, Theognis, Diogenes Laertius, and Democritus. This study first bore fruit in the case of a paper, *Zur Geschichte der Theognideischen Spruchsammlung*, which was subsequently published by the most influential journal of classical philology in Germany. Later, however, it enabled Nietzsche to enter for the prize offered by the University of Leipzig for an essay, *De fontibus Diogenis Laertii.* He was successful in gaining the prize, and the treatise was afterwards published in the *Rheinisches Museum,* and is still quoted as an authority. It is to this essay, written when he was twenty-three years of age, that he here refers.—TR.

France.... Stendhal is one of the happiest accidents of my life—for everything that marks an epoch in it has been brought to me by accident and never by means of a recommendation. He is quite priceless, with his psychologist's eye, quick at forestalling and anticipating; with his grasp of facts, which is reminiscent of the same art in the greatest of all masters of facts (*ex ungue Napoleonem*); and, last but not least, as an honest atheist—a specimen which is both rare and difficult to discover in France—all honour to Prosper Mérimée!... Maybe that I am even envious of Stendhal? He robbed me of the best atheistic joke, which I of all people could have perpetrated: "God's only excuse is that He does not exist" ... I myself have said somewhere—What has been the greatest objection to Life hitherto?—God....

4

It was Heinrich Heine who gave me the most perfect idea of what a lyrical poet could be. In vain do I search through all the kingdoms of antiquity or of modern times for anything to resemble his sweet and passionate music. He possessed that divine wickedness, without which perfection itself becomes unthinkable to me,—I estimate the value of men, of races, according to the extent to which they are unable to conceive of a god who has not a dash of the satyr in him. And with what mastery he wields his native tongue! One day it will be said of Heine and me that we were by far the greatest artists of the German language that have ever existed, and that we left all the efforts that mere Germans made in this language an incalculable distance behind us. I must be profoundly related to Byron's *Manfred:* of all the dark abysses in this work I found the counterparts in my own soul—at the age of thirteen I was ripe for this book. Words fail me, I have only a look, for those who dare to utter the name of *Faust* in the presence of *Manfred.* The Germans are *incapable* of conceiving anything sublime: for a proof of this, look at Schumann! Out of anger for this mawkish Saxon, I once deliberately composed a counter-overture to *Manfred,* of which Hans von Bülow declared he had never seen the like before on paper: such compositions amounted to a violation of Euterpe. When I cast about me for my highest formula of Shakespeare, I find invariably but this one: that he conceived the type of Cæsar. Such things a man cannot guess—he either is the thing, or he is not. The great poet draws his creations only from out of his own reality. This is so to such an extent, that often after a lapse of time he can no longer endure his own work.... After casting a glance between the pages of my *Zarathustra,* I pace my room to and fro for half an hour at a time, unable to overcome an insufferable fit of tears. I know of no more heartrending reading than Shakespeare: how a man must have suffered to be so much in need of playing the clown! Is Hamlet *understood*? It is not doubt, but certitude that drives one mad.... But in order to feel this, one must be profound, one must be an abyss, a philosopher.... We all fear the truth.... And, to make a confession; I feel instinctively certain and convinced that Lord Bacon is the originator, the self-torturer, of this most sinister kind of literature: what do I care about the miserable gabble of American muddlers and blockheads? But the power for the greatest realism in vision is not only compatible with the greatest realism in deeds, with the monstrous in deeds, with crime—*it actually presupposes the latter.* ... We do not know half enough about Lord Bacon—the first realist in all the highest acceptation of this word—to be sure of everything he did, everything he willed, and everything he experienced in his inmost soul.... Let the critics go to hell! Suppose I had christened my *Zarathustra* with a name not my own,—let us say with Richard Wagner's name,—the acumen of two thousand years would not have sufficed to guess that the author of *Human, all-too-Human* was the visionary of *Zarathustra.*

5

As I am speaking here of the recreations of my life, I feel I must express a word or two of gratitude for that which has refreshed me by far the most heartily and most profoundly. This,

without the slightest doubt, was my intimate relationship with Richard Wagner. All my other relationships with men I treat quite lightly; but I would not have the days I spent at Tribschen—those days of confidence, of cheerfulness, of sublime flashes, and of profound moments—blotted from my life at any price. I know not what Wagner may have been for others; but no cloud ever darkened *our* sky. And this brings me back again to France,—I have no arguments against Wagnerites, and *hoc genus omne* who believe that they do honour to Wagner by believing him to be like themselves; for such people I have only a contemptuous curl of my lip. With a nature like mine, which is so strange to everything Teutonic, that even the presence of a German retards my digestion, my first meeting with Wagner was the first moment in my life in which I breathed freely: I felt him, I honoured him, as a foreigner, as the opposite and the incarnate contradiction of all "German virtues." We who as children breathed the marshy atmosphere of the fifties, are necessarily pessimists in regard to the concept "German"; we cannot be anything else than revolutionaries—we can assent to no state of affairs which allows the canting bigot to be at the top. I care not a jot whether this canting bigot acts in different colours to-day, whether he dresses in scarlet or dons the uniform of a hussar.[5] Very well, then! Wagner was a revolutionary—he fled from the Germans.... As an artist, a man has no home in Europe save in Paris; that subtlety of all the five senses which Wagner's art presupposes, those fingers that can detect slight gradations, psychological morbidity—all these things can be found only in Paris. Nowhere else can you meet with this passion for questions of form, this earnestness in matters of *mise-en-scène,* which is the Parisian earnestness *par excellence.* In Germany no one has any idea of the tremendous ambition that fills the heart of a Parisian artist. The German is a good fellow. Wagner was by no means a good fellow.... But I have already said quite enough on the subject of Wagner's real nature (see *Beyond Good and Evil,* Aphorism 269), and about those to whom he is most closely related. He is one of the late French romanticists, that high-soaring and heaven-aspiring band of artists, like Delacroix and Berlioz, who in their inmost nacres are sick and incurable, and who are all fanatics of *expression,* and virtuosos through and through.... Who, in sooth, was the first intelligent follower of Wagner? Charles Baudelaire, the very man who first understood Delacroix—that typical decadent, in whom a whole generation of artists saw their reflection; he was perhaps the last of them too.... What is it that I have never forgiven Wagner? The fact that he condescended to the Germans—that he became a German Imperialist.... Wherever Germany spreads, she *ruins* culture.

6

Taking everything into consideration, I could never have survived my youth without Wagnerian music. For I was condemned to the society of Germans. If a man wish to get rid of a feeling of insufferable oppression, he has to take to hashish. Well, I had to take to Wagner. Wagner is the counter-poison to everything essentially German—the fact that he is a poison too, I do not deny. From the moment that *Tristan* was arranged for the piano—all honour to you, Herr von Bülow!—I was a Wagnerite. Wagner's previous works seemed beneath me—they were too commonplace, too "German." ... But to this day I am still seeking for a work which would be a match to *Tristan* in dangerous fascination, and possess the same gruesome and dulcet quality of infinity; I seek among all the arts in vain. All the quaint features of Leonardo da Vinci's work lose their charm at the sound of the first bar in *Tristan.* This work is without question Wagner's *non plus ultra*; after its creation, the composition of the *Mastersingers* and of the *Ring* was a relaxation to him. To become more healthy—this in a nature like Wagner's amounts to going backwards. The curiosity of the psychologist is so great in me, that I regard it as quite a special privilege to have lived at the right time, and to

[5] The favourite uniform of the German Emperor, William II.—TR.

have lived precisely among Germans, in order to be ripe for this work. The world must indeed be empty for him who has never been unhealthy enough for this “infernal voluptuousness”: it is allowable, it is even imperative, to employ a mystic formula for this purpose. I suppose I know better than any one the prodigious feats of which Wagner was capable, the fifty worlds of strange ecstasies to which no one else had wings to soar; and as I am alive to-day and strong enough to turn even the most suspicious and most dangerous things to my own advantage, and thus to grow stronger, I declare Wagner to have been the greatest benefactor of my life. The bond which unites us is the fact that we have suffered greater agony, even at each other’s hands, than most men are able to bear nowadays, and this will always keep our names associated in the minds of men. For, just as Wagner is merely a misunderstanding among Germans, so, in truth, am I, and ever will be. Ye lack two centuries of psychological and artistic discipline, my dear countrymen!... But ye can never recover the time lost.

7

To the most exceptional of my readers I should like to say just one word about what I really exact from music. It must be cheerful and yet profound, like an October afternoon. It must be original, exuberant, and tender, and like a dainty, soft woman in roguishness and grace ... I shall never admit that a German *can* understand what music is. Those musicians who are called German, the greatest and most famous foremost, are all foreigners, either Slavs, Croats, Italians, Dutchmen—or Jews; or else, like Heinrich Schütz, Bach, and Händel, they are Germans of a strong race which is now extinct. For my own part, I have still enough of the Pole left in me to let all other music go, if only I can keep Chopin. For three reasons I would except Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll,* and perhaps also one or two things of Liszt, who excelled all other musicians in the noble tone of his orchestration; and finally everything that has been produced beyond the Alps—*this side* of the Alps.[6] I could not possibly dispense with Rossini, and still less with my Southern soul in music, the work of my Venetian maestro, Pietro Gasti. And when I say beyond the Alps, all I really mean is Venice. If I try to find a new word for music, I can never find any other than Venice. I know not how to draw any distinction between tears and music. I do not know how to think either of joy, or of the south, without a shudder of fear.

On the bridge I stood
Lately, in gloomy night.
Came a distant song:
In golden drops it rolled
Over the glittering rim away.
Music, gondolas, lights—
Drunk, swam far forth in the gloom....

A stringed instrument, my soul,
Sang, imperceptibly moved,
A gondola song by stealth,
Gleaming for gaudy blessedness.
—Hearkened any thereto?

8

In all these things—in the choice of food, place, climate, and recreation—the instinct of self-preservation is dominant, and this instinct manifests itself with least ambiguity when it acts as an instinct of defence. To close one’s eyes to much, to seal one’s ears to much, to keep

[6] In the latter years of his life, Nietzsche practically made Italy his home.—TR.

certain things at a distance—this is the first principle of prudence, the first proof of the fact that a man is not an accident but a necessity. The popular word for this instinct of defence is *taste.* A man's imperative command is not only to say "no" in cases where "yes" would be a sign of "disinterestedness," but also to say "no" *as seldom as possible.* One must part with all that which compels one to repeat "no," with ever greater frequency. The rationale of this principle is that all discharges of defensive forces, however slight they may be, involve enormous and absolutely superfluous losses when they become regular and habitual. Our greatest expenditure of strength is made up of those small and most frequent discharges of it. The act of keeping things off, of holding them at a distance, amounts to a discharge of strength,—do not deceive yourselves on this point!—and an expenditure of energy directed at purely negative ends. Simply by being compelled to keep constantly on his guard, a man may grow so weak as to be unable any longer to defend himself. Suppose I were to step out of my house, and, instead of the quiet and aristocratic city of Turin, I were to find a German provincial town, my instinct would have to brace itself together in order to repel all that which would pour in upon it from this crushed-down and cowardly world. Or suppose I were to find a large German city—that structure of vice in which nothing grows, but where every single thing, whether good or bad, is squeezed in from outside. In such circumstances should I not be compelled to become a hedgehog? But to have prickles amounts to a squandering of strength; they even constitute a twofold luxury, when, if we only chose to do so, we could dispense with them and open our hands instead....

Another form of prudence and self-defence consists in trying to react as seldom as possible, and to keep one's self aloof from those circumstances and conditions wherein one would be condemned, as it were, to suspend one's "liberty" and one's initiative, and become a mere reacting medium. As an example of this I point to the intercourse with books. The scholar who, in sooth, does little else than handle books—with the philologist of average attainments their number may amount to two hundred a day—ultimately forgets entirely and completely the capacity of thinking for himself. When he has not a book between his fingers he cannot think. When he thinks, he responds to a stimulus (a thought he has read),—finally all he does is to react. The scholar exhausts his whole strength in saying either "yes" or "no" to matter which has already been thought out, or in criticising it—he is no longer capable of thought on his own account.... In him the instinct of self-defence has decayed, otherwise he would defend himself against books. The scholar is a decadent. With my own eyes I have seen gifted, richly endowed, and free-spirited natures already "read to ruins" at thirty, and mere wax vestas that have to be rubbed before they can give off any sparks—or "thoughts." To set to early in the morning, at the break of day, in all the fulness and dawn of one's strength, and to read a book—this I call positively vicious!

9

At this point I can no longer evade a direct answer to the question, *how one becomes what one is.* And in giving it, I shall have to touch upon that masterpiece in the art of self-preservation, which is *selfishness.* ... Granting that one's life-task—the determination and the fate of one's life-task—greatly exceeds the average measure of such things, nothing more dangerous could be conceived than to come face to face with one's self by the side of this life-task. The fact that one becomes what one is, presupposes that one has not the remotest suspicion of what one is. From this standpoint even the blunders of one's life have their own meaning and value, the temporary deviations and aberrations, the moments of hesitation and of modesty, the earnestness wasted upon duties which lie outside the actual life-task. In these matters great wisdom, perhaps even the highest wisdom, comes into activity: in these circumstances, in which *nosce teipsum* would be the sure road to ruin, forgetting one's self, misunderstanding one's self, belittling one's self, narrowing one's self, and making one's self

mediocre, amount to reason itself. Expressed morally, to love one's neighbour and to live for others and for other things *may* be the means of protection employed to maintain the hardest kind of egoism. This is the exceptional case in which I, contrary to my principle and conviction, take the side of the altruistic instincts; for here they are concerned in subserving selfishness and self-discipline. The whole surface of consciousness—for consciousness *is* a surface—must be kept free from any one of the great imperatives. Beware even of every striking word, of every striking attitude! They are all so many risks which the instinct runs of "understanding itself" too soon. Meanwhile the organising "idea," which is destined to become master, grows and continues to grow into the depths,—it begins to command, it leads you slowly back from your deviations and aberrations, it prepares individual qualities and capacities, which one day will make themselves felt as indispensable to the whole of your task,—step by step it cultivates all the serviceable faculties, before it ever whispers a word concerning the dominant task, the "goal," the "object," and the "meaning" of it all. Looked at from this standpoint my life is simply amazing. For the task of *transvaluing values,* more capacities were needful perhaps than could well be found side by side in one individual; and above all, antagonistic capacities which had to be free from the mutual strife and destruction which they involve. An order of rank among capacities; distance; the art of separating without creating hostility; to refrain from confounding things; to keep from reconciling things; to possess enormous multifariousness and yet to be the reverse of chaos—all this was the first condition, the long secret work, and the artistic mastery of my instinct. Its superior guardianship manifested itself with such exceeding strength, that not once did I ever dream of what was growing within me—until suddenly all my capacities were ripe, and one day burst forth in all the perfection of their highest bloom. I cannot remember ever having exerted myself, I can point to no trace of *struggle* in my life; I am the reverse of a heroic nature. To "will" something, to "strive" after something, to have an "aim" or a "desire" in my mind—I know none of these things from experience. Even at this moment I look out upon my future—a *broad* future!—as upon a calm sea: no sigh of longing makes a ripple on its surface. I have not the slightest wish that anything should be otherwise than it is: I myself would not be otherwise.... But in this matter I have always been the same. I have never had a desire. A man who, after his four-and-fortieth year, can say that he has never bothered himself about *honours, women,* or *money*!—not that they did not come his way.... It was thus that I became one day a University Professor—I had never had the remotest idea of such a thing; for I was scarcely four-and-twenty years of age. In the same way, two years previously, I had one day become a philologist, in the sense that my *first* philological work, my start in every way, was expressly obtained by my master Ritschl for publication in his *Rheinisches Museum.*[7] (Ritschl—and I say it in all reverence—was the only genial scholar that I have ever met. He possessed that pleasant kind of depravity which distinguishes us Thuringians, and which makes even a German sympathetic—even in the pursuit of truth we prefer to avail ourselves of roundabout ways. In saying this I do not mean to underestimate in any way my Thuringian brother, the intelligent Leopold von Ranke....)

10

You may be wondering why I should actually have related all these trivial and, according to traditional accounts, insignificant details to you; such action can but tell against me, more particularly if I am fated to figure in great causes. To this I reply that these trivial matters—diet, locality, climate, and one's mode of recreation, the whole casuistry of; self-love—are inconceivably more important than, all that which has hitherto been held in high esteem! It is precisely in this quarter that we must begin to learn afresh. All those things which mankind

[7] See note on page 37.

has valued with such earnestness heretofore are not even real; they are mere creations of fancy, or, more strictly speaking, *lies* born of the evil instincts of diseased and, in the deepest sense, noxious natures—all the concepts, “God,” “soul,” “virtue,” “sin,” “Beyond,” “truth,” “eternal life.” ... But the greatness of human nature, its “divinity,” was sought for in them.... All questions of politics, of social order, of education, have been falsified, root and branch, owing to the fact that the most noxious men have been taken for great men, and that people were taught to despise the small things, or rather the fundamental things, of life. If I now choose to compare myself with those creatures who have hitherto been honoured as the first among men, the difference becomes obvious. I do not reckon the so-called “first” men even as human beings—for me they are the excrements of mankind, the products of disease and of the instinct of revenge: they are so many monsters laden with rottenness, so many hopeless incurables, who avenge themselves on life.... I wish to be the opposite of these people: it is my privilege to have the very sharpest discernment for every sign of healthy instincts. There is no such thing as a morbid trait in me; even in times of serious illness I have never grown morbid, and you might seek in vain for a trace of fanaticism in my nature. No one can point to any moment of my life in which I have assumed either an arrogant or a pathetic attitude. Pathetic attitudes are not in keeping with greatness; he who needs attitudes is false.... Beware of all picturesque men! Life was easy—in fact easiest—to me, in those periods when it exacted the heaviest duties from me. Whoever could have seen me during the seventy days of this autumn, when, without interruption, I did a host of things of the highest rank—things that no man can do nowadays—with a sense of responsibility for all the ages yet to come, would have noticed no sign of tension in my condition, but rather a state of overflowing freshness and good cheer. Never have I eaten with more pleasant sensations, never has my sleep been better. I know of no other manner of dealing with great tasks, than as *play*: this, as a sign of greatness, is an essential prerequisite. The slightest constraint, a sombre mien, any hard accent in the voice—all these things are objections to a man, but how much more to his work!... One must not have nerves.... Even to *suffer* from solitude is an objection—the only thing I have always suffered from is “multitude.”[8] At an absurdly tender age, in fact when I was seven years old, I already knew that no human speech would ever reach me: did any one ever see me sad on that account? At present I still possess the same affability towards everybody, I am even full of consideration for the lowest: in all this there is not an atom of haughtiness or of secret contempt. He whom I despise soon guesses that he is despised by me: the very fact of my existence is enough to rouse indignation in all those who have polluted blood in their veins. My formula for greatness in man is! *amor fati*: the fact that a man wishes nothing to be different, either in front of him or behind him, or for all eternity. Not only must the necessary be borne, and on no account concealed,—all idealism is falsehood in the face of necessity,—but it must also be *loved*....

[8] The German words are, *Einsamkeit* and *Vielsamkeit.* The latter was coined by Nietzsche. The English word "multitude" should, therefore, be understood as signifying multifarious instincts and gifts, which in Nietzsche strove for ascendancy and caused him more suffering than any solitude. Complexity of this sort, held in check by a dominant instinct, as in Nietzsche's case, is of course the only possible basis of an artistic nature.—TR.

Why I Write Such Excellent Books

1

I am one thing, my creations are another. Here, before I speak of the books themselves, I shall touch upon the question of the understanding and misunderstanding with which they have met. I shall proceed to do this in as perfunctory a manner as the occasion demands; for the time has by no means come for this question. My time has not yet come either; some are born posthumously. One s day institutions will be needed in which men will live and teach, as I understand living and teaching; maybe, also, that by that time, chairs will be founded and endowed for the interpretation of *Zarathustra.* But I should regard it as a complete contradiction of myself, if I expected to find ears and eyes for my truths to-day: the fact that no one listens to me, that no one knows how to receive at my hands to-day, is not only comprehensible, it seems to me quite the proper thing. I do not wish to be mistaken for another—and to this end I must not mistake myself. To repeat what I have already said, I can point to but few instances of ill-will in my life: and as for literary ill-will, I could mention scarcely a single example of it. On the other hand, I have met with far too much *pure foolery*!... It seems to me that to take up one of my books is one of the rarest honours that a man can pay himself—even supposing that he put his shoes from off his feet beforehand, not to mention boots.... When on one occasion Dr. Heinrich von Stein honestly complained that he could not understand a word of my *Zarathustra,* I said to him that this was just as it should be: to have understood six sentences in that book—that is to say, to have lived them—raises a man to a higher level among mortals than "modern" men can attain. With this feeling of distance how could I even wish to be read by the "moderns" whom I know! My triumph is just the opposite of what Schopenhauer's was—I say "*Non* legor, *non* legar."—Not that I should like to underestimate the pleasure I have derived from the innocence with which my works have frequently been contradicted. As late as last summer, at a time when I was attempting, perhaps by means of my weighty, all-too-weighty literature, to throw the rest of literature off its balance, a certain professor of Berlin University kindly gave me to understand that I ought really to make use of a different form: no one could read such stuff as I wrote.—Finally, it was not Germany, but Switzerland that presented me with the two most extreme cases. An essay on *Beyond Good and Evil,* by Dr. V. Widmann in the paper called the *Bund,* under the heading "Nietzsche's Dangerous Book," and a general account of all my works, from the pen of Herr Karl Spitteler, also in the *Bund,* constitute a maximum in my life—I shall not say of what.... The latter treated my *Zarathustra,* for instance as "*advanced exercises in style*," and expressed the wish that later on I might try and attend to the question of substance as well; Dr. Widmann assured me of his respect for the courage I showed in endeavouring to abolish all decent feeling. Thanks to a little trick of destiny, every sentence in these criticisms seemed, with a consistency that I could but admire, to be an inverted truth. In fact it was most remarkable that all one had to do was to "transvalue all values," in order to hit the nail on the head with regard to me, instead of striking my head with the nail.... I am more particularly anxious therefore to discover an explanation. After all, no one can draw more out of things, books included, than he already knows. A man has no ears for that to which experience has given him no access. To take an extreme case, suppose a book contains simply incidents which lie quite outside the range of general or even rare experience—suppose it to be the *first* language to express a whole series of experiences. In this case nothing it contains will really be heard at all, and, thanks to an acoustic delusion, people will believe that where nothing is heard there is nothing to hear.... This, at least, has been my usual experience, and proves, if you will, the originality of my experience. He who thought

he had understood something in my work, had as a rule adjusted something in it to his own image—not infrequently the very opposite of myself, an "idealist," for instance. He who understood nothing in my work, would deny that I was worth considering at all.—The word "Superman," which designates a type of man that would be one of nature's rarest and luckiest strokes, as opposed to "modern" men, to "good" men, to Christians and other Nihilists,—a word which in the mouth of Zarathustra, the annihilator of morality, acquires a very profound meaning,—is understood almost everywhere, and with perfect innocence, in the light of those values to which a flat contradiction was made manifest in the figure of Zarathustra—that is to say, as an "ideal" type, a higher kind of man, half "saint" and half "genius." ... Other learned cattle have suspected me of Darwinism on account of this word: even the "hero cult" of that great unconscious and involuntary swindler, Carlyle,—a cult which I repudiated with such roguish malice,—was recognised in my doctrine. Once, when I whispered to a man that he would do better I to seek for the Superman in a Cæsar Borgia than in a Parsifal, he could not believe his ears. The fact that I am quite free from curiosity in regard to criticisms of my books, more particularly when they appear in newspapers, will have to be forgiven me. My friends and my publishers know this, and never speak to me of such things. In one particular case, I once saw all the sins that had been committed against a single book—it was *Beyond Good and Evil;* I could tell you a nice story about it. Is it possible that the *National-Zeitung*—a Prussian paper (this comment is for the sake of my foreign readers—for my own part, I beg to state, I read only *Le Journal des Débats*)—really and seriously regarded the book as a "sign of the times," or a genuine and typical example of Tory philosophy,[9] for which the *Kreuz-Zeitung* had not sufficient courage?...

2

This was said for the benefit of Germans: for everywhere else I have my readers—all of them exceptionally intelligent men, characters that have won their spurs and that have been reared in high offices and superior duties; I have even real geniuses among my readers. In Vienna, in St Petersburg, in Stockholm, in Copenhagen, in Paris, and New York—I have been discovered everywhere: I have not yet been discovered in Europe's flatland—Germany.... And, to make a confession, I rejoice much more heartily over those who do not read me, over those who have neither heard of my name nor of the word philosophy. But whithersoever I go, here in Turin, for instance, every face brightens and softens at the sight of me. A thing that has flattered me more than anything else hitherto, is the fact that old market-women cannot rest until they have picked out the sweetest of their grapes for me. To this extent must a man be a philosopher.... It is not in vain that the Poles are considered as the French among the Slavs. A charming Russian lady will not be mistaken for a single moment concerning my origin. I am not successful at being pompous, the most I can do is to appear embarrassed.... I can think in German, I can feel in German—I can do most things; but this is beyond my powers.... My old master Ritschl went so far as to declare that I planned even my philological treatises after the manner of a Parisian novelist—that I made them absurdly thrilling. In Paris itself people are surprised at "*toutes mes audaces et finesses*";—the words are Monsieur Taine's;—I fear that even in the highest forms of the dithyramb, that salt will be found pervading my work which never becomes insipid, which never becomes "German"—and that is, wit.... I can do nought else. God help me! Amen.—We all know, some of us even from experience, what a "long-ears" is. Well then, I venture to assert that I have the smallest ears that have ever been seen. This fact is not without interest to women—it seems to me they feel

[9] *Junker-Philosophie.* The landed proprietors constitute the dominating class in Prussia, and it is from this class that all officers and higher officials are drawn. The *Kreuz-Zeitung* is the organ of the Junker party.—TR.

that I understand them better!... I am essentially the anti-ass, and on this account alone a monster in the world's history—in Greek, and not only in Greek, I am the *Antichrist.*

3

I am to a great extent aware of my privileges as a writer: in one or two cases it has even been brought home to me how very much the habitual > reading of my works "spoils" a man's taste. Other books simply cannot be endured after mine, and least of all philosophical ones. It is an incomparable distinction to cross the threshold of this noble and subtle world—in order to do so one must certainly not be a German; it is, in short, a distinction which one must have deserved. He, however, who is related to me through loftiness of will, experiences genuine raptures of understanding in my books: for I swoop down from heights into which no bird has ever soared; I know abysses into which no foot has ever slipped. People have told me that it is impossible to lay down a book of mine—that I disturb even the night's rest.... There is no prouder or at the same time more subtle kind of books: they sometimes attain to the highest pinnacle of earthly endeavour, cynicism; to capture their thoughts a man must have the tenderest fingers as well as the most intrepid fists. Any kind of spiritual decrepitude utterly excludes all intercourse with them—even any kind of dyspepsia: a man must have no nerves, but he must have a cheerful belly. Not only the poverty of a man's soul and its stuffy air excludes all intercourse with them, but also, and to a much greater degree, cowardice, uncleanliness, and secret intestinal revengefulness; a word from my lips suffices to make the colour of all evil instincts rush into a face. Among my acquaintances I have a number of experimental subjects, in whom I see depicted all the different, and instructively different, reactions which follow upon a perusal of my works. Those who will have nothing to do with the contents of my books, as for instance my so-called friends, assume an "impersonal" tone concerning them: they wish me luck, and congratulate me for having produced another work; they also declare that my writings show progress, because they exhale a more cheerful spirit.... The thoroughly vicious people, the "beautiful souls," the false from top to toe, do not know in the least what to do with my books—consequently, with the beautiful consistency of all beautiful souls, they regard my work as beneath them. The cattle among my acquaintances, the mere Germans, leave me to understand, if you please, that they are not always of my opinion, though here and there they agree with me.... I have heard this said even about *Zarathustra.* "Feminism," whether in mankind or in man, is likewise a barrier to my writings; with it, no one could ever enter into this labyrinth of fearless knowledge. To this end, a man must never have spared himself, he must have been hard in his habits, in order to be good-humoured and merry among a host of inexorable truths. When I try to picture the character of a perfect reader, I always imagine a monster of courage and curiosity, as well as of suppleness, cunning, and prudence—in short, a born adventurer and explorer. After all, I could not describe better than *Zarathustra* has done unto whom I really address myself: unto whom alone would he reveal his riddle?

"Unto you, daring explorers and experimenters, and unto all who have ever embarked beneath cunning sails upon terrible seas;

"Unto you who revel in riddles and in twilight, whose souls are lured by flutes unto every treacherous abyss:

"For ye care not to grope your way along a thread with craven fingers; and where ye are able to *guess,* ye hate to *argue*?"

4

I will now pass just one or two general remarks about my *art of style.* To communicate a state an inner tension of pathos by means of signs, including the tempo of these signs,—that

is the meaning of every style; and in view of the fact that the multiplicity of inner states in me is enormous, I am capable of many kinds of style—in short, the most multifarious art of style that any man has ever had at his disposal. Any style is *good* which genuinely communicates an inner condition, which does not blunder over the signs, over the tempo of the signs, or over *moods*—all the laws of phrasing are the outcome of representing moods artistically. Good style, in itself, is a piece of sheer foolery, mere idealism, like "beauty in itself," for instance, or "goodness in itself," or "the thing-in-itself." All this takes for granted, of course, that there exist ears that can hear, and such men as are capable and worthy of a like pathos, that those are not wanting unto whom one may communicate one's self. Meanwhile my Zarathustra, for instance, is still in quest of such people—alas! he will have to seek a long while yet! A man must be worthy of listening to him.... And, until that time, there will be no one who will understand the art that has been squandered in this book. No one has ever existed who has had more novel, more strange, and purposely created art forms to fling to the winds. The fact that such things were possible in the German language still awaited proof; formerly, I myself would have denied most emphatically that it was possible. Before my time people did not know what could be done with the German language—what could be done with language in general. The art of grand rhythm, of grand style in periods, for expressing the tremendous fluctuations of sublime and superhuman passion, was first discovered by me: with the dithyramb entitled "The Seven Seals," which constitutes the last discourse of the third part of *Zarathustra,* I soared miles above all that which heretofore has been called poetry.

5

The fact that the voice which speaks in my works is that of a psychologist who has not his peer, is perhaps the first conclusion at which a good reader will arrive—a reader such as I deserve, and one who reads me just as the good old philologists used to read their Horace. Those propositions about which all the world is fundamentally agreed—not to speak of fashionable philosophy, of moralists and other empty-headed and cabbage-brained people—are to me but ingenuous blunders: for instance, the belief that "altruistic" and "egoistic"; are opposites, while all the time the "ego" itself is merely a "supreme swindle," an "ideal." ... There are no such things as egoistic or altruistic actions: both concepts are psychological nonsense. Or the proposition that "man pursues happiness"; or the proposition that "happiness is the reward of virtue." ... Or the proposition that "pleasure and pain are opposites." ... Morality, the Circe of mankind, has falsified everything psychological, root and branch—it has demoralised everything, even to the terribly nonsensical point of calling love "unselfish." A man must first be firmly poised, he must stand securely on his two legs, otherwise he cannot love at all. This indeed the girls know only too well: they don't care two pins about unselfish and merely objective men.... May I venture to suggest, incidentally, that I know women? This knowledge is part of my Dionysian patrimony. Who knows? maybe I am the first psychologist of the eternally feminine. Women all like me.... But that's an old story: save, of course, the abortions among them, the emancipated ones, those who lack the wherewithal to have children. Thank goodness I am not willing to let myself be torn to pieces! the perfect woman tears you to pieces when she loves you: I know these amiable Mænads.... Oh! what a dangerous, creeping, subterranean little beast of prey she is! And so agreeable withal! ... A little woman, pursuing her vengeance, would force open even the iron gates of Fate itself. Woman is incalculably more wicked than man, she is also cleverer. Goodness in a woman is already a sign of *degeneration.* All cases of "beautiful souls" in women may be traced to a faulty physiological condition—but I go no further, lest I should become medicynical. The struggle for equal rights is even a symptom of disease; every doctor knows this. The more womanly a woman is, the more she fights tooth and nail against rights in

general: the natural order of things, the eternal war between the sexes, assigns to her by far the foremost rank. Have people had ears to hear my definition of love? It is the only definition worthy of a philosopher. Love, in its means, is war; in its foundation, it is the mortal hatred of the sexes. Have you heard my reply to the question how a woman can be cured, "saved" in fact?—Give her a child! A woman needs children, man is always only a means, thus spake Zarathustra. "The emancipation of women,"—this is the instinctive hatred of physiologically botched—that is to say, barren—women for those of their sisters who are well constituted: the fight against "man" is always only a means, a pretext, a piece of strategy. By trying to rise to "Woman *per se*," to "Higher Woman," to the "Ideal Woman," all they wish to do is to lower the general level of women's rank: and there are no more certain means to this end than university education, trousers, and the rights of voting cattle. Truth to tell, the emancipated are the anarchists in the "eternally feminine" world, the physiological mishaps, the most deep-rooted instinct of whom is revenge. A whole species of the most malicious "idealism"—which, by the bye, also manifests itself in men, in Henrik Ibsen for instance, that typical old maid—whose object is to poison the clean conscience, the natural spirit, of sexual love.... And in order to leave no doubt in your minds in regard to my opinion, which, on this matter, is as honest as it is severe, I will reveal to you one more clause out of my moral code against vice—with the word "vice" I combat every kind of! opposition to Nature, or, if you prefer fine words, idealism. The clause reads: "Preaching of chastity is a public incitement to unnatural practices. All depreciation of the sexual life, all the sullying of it by means of the concept 'impure,' is the essential crime against Life—is the essential crime against the Holy Spirit of Life."

In order to give you some idea of myself as a psychologist, let me take this curious piece of psychological analysis out of the book *Beyond Good and Evil,* in which it appears. I forbid, by the bye, any guessing as to whom I am describing in this passage. "The genius of the heart, as that great anchorite possesses it, the divine tempter and born Pied Piper of consciences, whose voice knows how to sink into the inmost depths of every soul, who neither utters a word nor casts a glance, in which some seductive motive or trick does not lie: a part of whose masterliness is that he understands the art of seeming—not what he is, but that which will place a fresh constraint upon his followers to press ever more closely upon him, to follow him ever more enthusiastically and whole-heartedly.... The genius of the heart, which makes all loud and self-conceited things hold their tongues and lend their ears, which polishes all rough souls and makes them taste a new longing—to lie placid as a mirror, that the deep heavens may be reflected in them.... The genius of the heart which teaches the clumsy and too hasty hand to hesitate and grasp more tenderly; which scents the hidden and forgotten treasure, the pearl of goodness and sweet spirituality, beneath thick black ice, and is a divining rod for every grain of gold, long buried and imprisoned in heaps of mud and sand.... The genius of the heart, from contact with which every man goes away richer, not 'blessed' and overcome, not as though favoured and crushed by the good things of others; but richer in himself, fresher to himself than before, opened up, breathed upon and sounded by a thawing wind; more uncertain, perhaps, more delicate, more fragile, more bruised; but full of hopes which as yet lack names, full of a new will and striving, full of a new unwillingness and counter-striving." ...

“The Birth Of Tragedy”

1

In order to be fair to the *Birth of Tragedy* (1872) it is necessary to forget a few things. It created a sensation and even fascinated by means of its mistakes—by means of its application to Wagnerism, as if the latter were the sign of an ascending tendency. On that account alone, this treatise was an event in Wagner’s life: thenceforward great hopes surrounded the name of Wagner. Even to this day, people remind me, sometimes in the middle of *Parsifal,* that it rests on my conscience if the opinion, that this movement is of great value to culture, at length became prevalent I have often seen the book quoted as “The Second Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music”: people had ears only for new formulæ for Wagner’s art, his object and his mission—and in this way the real hidden value of the book was overlooked. “Hellenism and Pessimism”—this would have been a less equivocal title, seeing that the book contains the first attempt at showing how the Greeks succeeded in disposing: of pessimism—in what manner they overcame it. ... Tragedy itself is the proof of the fact that the Greeks were not pessimists: Schopenhauer blundered here as he blundered in everything else.—Regarded impartially, *The Birth of Tragedy* is a book quite strange to its age: no one would dream that it was begun in the thunder of the battle of Wörth. I thought out these problems on cold September nights beneath the walls of Metz, in the midst of my duties as nurse to the wounded; it would be easier to think that it was written fifty years earlier. Its attitude towards politics is one of indifference,—”un-German,”[10] as people would say to-day,—it smells offensively of Hegel; only in one or two formulæ is it infected with the bitter odour of corpses which is peculiar to Schopenhauer. An idea—the antagonism of the two concepts Dionysian and Apollonian—is translated into metaphysics; history itself is depicted as the development of this idea; in tragedy this antithesis has become unity; from this standpoint things which theretofore had never been face to face are suddenly confronted, and understood and illuminated by each other.... Opera and revolution, for instance.... The two decisive innovations in the book are, first, the comprehension of the Dionysian phenomenon among the Greeks—it provides the first psychological analysis of this phenomenon, and sees in it the single root of all Greek art; and, secondly, the comprehension of Socraticism—Socrates being presented for the first time as the instrument of Greek dissolution, as a typical decadent. “Reason” *versus* Instinct. “Reason” at any cost, as a dangerous, life-undermining force. The whole book is profoundly and politely silent concerning Christianity: the latter is neither Apollonian nor Dionysian; it denies all æsthetic values, which are the only values that *The Birth of Tragedy* recognises. Christianity is most profoundly nihilistic, whereas in the Dionysian symbol, the most extreme limits of a yea-saying attitude to life are attained. In one part of the book the Christian priesthood is referred to as a “perfidious order of goblins,” as “subterraneans.”

2

This start of mine was remarkable beyond measure. As a confirmation of my inmost personal experience I had discovered the only example of this fact that history possesses,—with this I was the first to understand the amazing Dionysian phenomenon. At the same time, by recognising Socrates as a decadent, I proved most conclusively that the certainty of my

[10] Those Germans who, like Nietzsche or Goethe, recognised that politics constituted a danger to culture, and who appreciated the literature of maturer cultures, such as that of France, are called *un-deutsch* (un-German) by Imperialistic Germans.—Tr.

psychological grasp of things ran very little risk at the hands of any sort of moral idiosyncrasy: to regard morality itself as a symptom of degeneration is an innovation, a unique event of the first order in the history of knowledge. How high I had soared above the pitifully foolish gabble about Optimism and Pessimism with my two new doctrines! I was the first to see the actual contrast: the degenerate instinct which turns upon life with a subterranean lust of vengeance (Christianity, Schopenhauer's philosophy, and in some respects too even Plato's philosophy—in short, the whole of idealism in its typical forms), as opposed to a formula of the highest yea-saying to life, born of an abundance and a superabundance of life—a I yea-saying free from all reserve, applying even to suffering, and guilt, and all that is questionable and strange in existence.... This last, most joyous, most exuberant and exultant yea to life, is not only the highest, but also the profoundest conception, and one which is most strictly confirmed and supported by truth and science. Nothing that exists must be suppressed, nothing can be dispensed with. Those aspects of life which Christians and other Nihilists reject, belong to an incalculably higher order in the hierarchy of values, than that which the instinct of degeneration calls good, and *may* call good. In order to understand this, a certain courage is necessary, and, as a prerequisite of this, a certain superfluity of strength: for a man can approach only as near to truth as he has the courage to advance—that is to say, everything depends strictly upon the measure of his strength. Knowledge, and the affirmation of reality, are just as necessary to the strong man as cowardice, the flight from reality—in fact, the "ideal"—are necessary to the weak inspired by weakness.... These people are not at liberty to "know,"—decadents stand in need of lies,—it is one of their self-preservative measures. He who not only understands the word "Dionysian," but understands *himself* in that term, does not require any refutation of Plato, or of Christianity, or of Schopenhauer—for his nose *scents decomposition.*

3

The extent to which I had by means of these doctrines discovered the idea of "tragedy," the ultimate explanation of what the psychology of tragedy is, I discussed finally in *The Twilight of the Idols* (Aph. 5, part 10).... "The saying of yea to life, and even to its weirdest and most difficult problems: the will to life rejoicing at its own infinite vitality in the sacrifice of its highest types—that is what I called Dionysian, that is what I meant as the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet. Not to cast out terror and pity, or to purge one's self of dangerous passion by discharging it with vehemence,—this was Aristotle's[11] misunderstanding of it,—but to be far beyond terror and pity and to be the eternal lust of Becoming itself—that lust which also involves the joy of destruction." ... In this sense I have the right to regard myself as the first *tragic philosopher*—that is to say, the most extreme antithesis and antipodes of a pessimistic philosopher. Before my time no such thing existed as this translation of the Dionysian phenomenon into philosophic emotion: tragic wisdom was lacking; in vain have I sought for signs of it even among the great Greeks in philosophy—those belonging to the two centuries before Socrates. I still remained a little doubtful about Heraclitus, in whose presence, alone, I felt warmer and more at ease than anywhere else. The yea-saying to the impermanence and annihilation of things, which is the decisive feature of a Dionysian philosophy; the yea-saying to contradiction and war, the postulation of Becoming, together with the radical rejection even of the concept *Being*— in all these things, at all events, I must recognise him who has come nearest to me in thought hither to. The doctrine of the "Eternal Recurrence"—that is to say, of the absolute and eternal repetition of all things in periodical cycles—this doctrine of Zarathustra's might, it is true,

[11] Aristotle's *Poetics*, c. vi.—Tr.

have been taught before. In any case, the Stoics, who derived nearly all their fundamental ideas from Heraclitus, show traces of it.

A tremendous hope finds expression in this work. After all, I have absolutely no reason to renounce the hope for a Dionysian future of music. Let us look a century ahead, and let us suppose that my attempt to destroy two millenniums of hostility to Nature and of the violation of humanity be crowned with success That new party of life-advocates, which will undertake the greatest of all tasks, the elevation and perfection of mankind, as well as the relentless destruction of all degenerate and parasitical elements, will make that *superabundance of life* on earth once more possible, out of which the Dionysian state will perforce arise again. I promise the advent of a tragic age: the highest art in the saying of yea to life, "tragedy," will be born again when mankind has the knowledge of the hardest, but most necessary of wars, behind it, without, however, suffering from that knowledge.... A psychologist might add that what I heard in Wagnerian music in my youth and early manhood had nothing whatsoever to do with Wagner; that when I described Dionysian music, I described merely what *I* personally had heard—that I was compelled instinctively to translate and transfigure everything into the new spirit which filled my breast. A proof of this, and as strong a proof as you could have, is my essay, *Wagner in Bayreuth*: in all its decisive psychological passages I am the only person concerned—without any hesitation you may read my name or the word "Zarathustra" wherever the text contains the name of Wagner. The whole panorama of the *dithyrambic* artist is the representation of the already existing author of *Zarathustra,* and it is drawn with an abysmal depth which does not even once come into contact with the real Wagner. Wagner himself had a notion of the truth; he did not recognise himself in the essay.—In this way, "the idea of Bayreuth" was changed into something which to those who are acquainted with my *Zarathustra* will be no riddle—that is to say, into the Great Noon when the highest of the elect will consecrate themselves for the greatest of all duties—who knows? the vision of a feast which I may live to see.... The pathos of the first few pages is universal history; the look which is discussed on page 105[12] of the book, is the actual look of *Zarathustra;* Wagner, Bayreuth, the whole of this petty German wretchedness, is a cloud upon which an infinite Fata Morgana of the future is reflected. Even from the psychological standpoint, all the decisive traits in my character are introduced into Wagner's nature—the juxtaposition of the most brilliant and most fatal forces, a Will to Power such as no man has ever possessed—inexorable bravery in matters spiritual, an unlimited power of learning unaccompanied by depressed powers for action. Everything in this essay is a prophecy: the proximity of the resurrection of the Greek spirit, the need of men who will be counter-Alexanders, who will once more tie the Gordian knot of Greek culture, after it has been cut. Listen to the world-historic accent with which the concept "sense for the tragic" is introduced on page 180: there are little else but world-historic accents in this essay. This is the strangest kind of "objectivity" that ever existed: my absolute certainty in regard to what I *am,* projected itself into any chance reality—truth about myself was voiced from out appalling depths. On pages 174 and 175 the style of *Zarathustra* is described and foretold with incisive certainty, and no more magnificent expression will ever be found than that on pages 144-147 for the event for which *Zarathustra* stands—that prodigious act of the purification and consecration of mankind.

[12] This number and those which follow refer to *Thoughts out of Season,* Part I. in this edition of Nietzsche's Works.—TR.

"Thoughts Out Of Season"

1

The four essays composing the *Thoughts out of Season* are thoroughly warlike in tone. They prove that I was no mere dreamer, that I delight in drawing the sword—and perhaps, also, that my wrist is dangerously supple. The first onslaught (1873) was directed against German culture, upon which I looked down even at that time with unmitigated contempt Without either sense, substance, or goal, it was simply "public opinion." There could be no more dangerous misunderstanding than to suppose that Germany's success at arms proved anything in favour of German culture—and still less the triumph of this culture; over that of France. The second essay (1874) brings to light that which is dangerous, that which corrodes and poisons life in our manner of pursuing scientific study: Life is diseased, thanks to this dehumanised piece of clockwork and mechanism, thanks to the "impersonality" of the workman, 1 and the false economy of the "division of labour." The object, which is culture, is lost sight of: modern scientific activity as a means thereto simply produces barbarism. In this treatise, the "historical sense," of which this century is so proud, is for the first time recognised as sickness, as a typical symptom of decay. In the third and fourth essays, a sign-post is set up pointing to a higher concept of culture, to a re-establishment of the notion "culture"; and two pictures of the hardest self-love and self-discipline are presented, two essentially un-modern types, full of the most sovereign contempt for all that which lay around them and was called "Empire," "Culture," "Christianity," "Bismarck," and "Success,"—these two types were Schopenhauer and Wagner, *or,* in a word, Nietzsche....

2

Of these four attacks, the first met with extraordinary success. The stir which it created was in every way gorgeous. I had put my finger on the vulnerable spot of a triumphant nation—I had told it that its victory was not a red-letter day for culture, but, perhaps, something very different. The reply rang out from all sides, and certainly not only from old friends of David Strauss, whom I had made ridiculous as the type of a German Philistine of Culture and a man of smug self-content—in short, as the author of that suburban gospel of his, called *The Old and the New Faith* (the term "Philistine of Culture" passed into the current language of Germany after the appearance of my book). These old friends, whose vanity as Würtembergians and Swabians I had deeply wounded in regarding their unique animal, their bird of Paradise, as a trifle comic, replied to me as ingenuously and as grossly as I could have wished. The Prussian replies were smarter; they contained more "Prussian blue." The most disreputable attitude was assumed by a Leipzig paper, the egregious *Grentzboten*; and it cost me some pains to prevent my indignant friends in Bâle from taking action against it. Only a few old gentlemen decided in my favour, and for very diverse and sometimes unaccountable reasons. Among them was one, Ewald of Göttingen, who made it clear that my attack on Strauss had been deadly. There was also the Hegelian, Bruno Bauer, who from that time became one of my most attentive readers. In his later years he liked to refer to me, when, for instance, he wanted to give Herr von Treitschke, the Prussian Historiographer, a hint as to where he could obtain information about the notion "Culture," of which he (Herr von T.) had completely lost sight. The weightiest and longest notice of my book and its author appeared in Würzburg, and was written by Professor Hoffmann, an old pupil of the philosopher von Baader. The essays made him foresee a great future for me, namely, that of bringing about a sort of crisis and decisive turning-point in the problem of atheism, of which he recognised in me the most instinctive and most radical advocate. It was atheism that had drawn me to

Schopenhauer. The review which received by far the most attention, and which excited the most bitterness, was an extraordinarily powerful and plucky appreciation of my work by Carl Hillebrand, a man who was usually so mild, and the last *humane* German who knew how to wield a pen. The article appeared in the *Augsburg Gazette,* and it can be read to-day, couched in rather more cautious language, among his collected essays. In it my work was referred to as an event, as a decisive turning-point, as the first sign of an awakening, as an excellent symptom, and as an actual revival of German earnestness and of German passion in things spiritual. Hillebrand could speak only in the terms of the highest respect, of the form of my book, of its consummate taste, of its perfect tact in discriminating between persons and causes: he characterised it as the best polemical work in the German language,—the best performance in the art of polemics, which for Germans is so dangerous and so strongly to be deprecated. Besides confirming my standpoint, he laid even greater stress upon what I had dared to say about the deterioration of language in Germany (nowadays writers assume the airs of Purists[13] and can no longer even construct a sentence); sharing my contempt for the literary stars of this nation, he concluded by expressing his admiration for my courage—that "greatest courage of all which places the very favourites of the people in the dock." ... The after-effects of this essay of mine proved invaluable to me in my life. No one has ever tried to meddle with me since. People are silent. In Germany I am treated with gloomy caution: for years I have rejoiced in the privilege of such absolute freedom of speech, as no one nowadays, least of all in the "Empire," has enough liberty to claim. My paradise is "in the shadow of my sword." At bottom all I had done was to put one of Stendhal's maxims into practice: he advises one to make one's entrance into society by means of a duel. And how well I had chosen my opponent!—the foremost free-thinker of Germany. As a matter of fact, quite a novel kind of free thought found its expression in this way: up to the present nothing has been more strange and more foreign to my blood than the whole of that European and American species known as *litres penseurs.* Incorrigible blockheads and clowns of "modern ideas" that they are, I feel much more profoundly at variance with them than with any one of their adversaries. They also wish to "improve" mankind, after their own fashion—that is to say, in their own image; against that which I stand for and desire, they would wage an implacable war, if only they understood it; the whole gang of them still believe in an "ideal." ... I am the first *Immoralist*.

3

I should not like to say that the last two essays in the *Thoughts out of Season,* associated with the names of Schopenhauer and Wagner respectively, serve any special purpose in throwing light upon these two cases, or in formulating their psychological problems. This of course does not apply to a few details. Thus, for instance, in the second of the two essays, with a profound certainty of instinct I already characterised the elementary factor in Wagner's nature as a theatrical talent which in all his means and inspirations only draws its final conclusions. At bottom, my desire in this essay was to do something very different from writing psychology: an unprecedented educational problem, a new understanding of self-discipline and self-defence carried to the point of hardness, a road to greatness and to world-historic duties, yearned to find expression. Roughly speaking, I seized two famous and, theretofore, completely undefined types by the forelock, after the manner in which one seizes opportunities, simply in order to speak my mind on certain questions, in order to have a few

[13] The Purists constitute a definite body in Germany, which is called the *Deutscher Sprach-Verein.* Their object is to banish every foreign word from the language, and they carry this process of ostracism even into the domain of the menu, where their efforts at rendering the meaning of French dishes are extremely comical. Strange to say, their principal organ, and their other publications, are by no means free either from solecisms or faults of style, and it is doubtless to this curious anomaly that Nietzsche here refers.—TR.

more formulas, signs, and means of expression at my disposal. Indeed I actually suggest this, with most unearthly sagacity, on page 183 of *Schopenhauer as Educator.* Plato made use of Socrates in the same way—that is to say, as a cipher for Plato. Now that, from some distance, I can look back upon the conditions of which these essays are the testimony, I would be loth to deny that they refer simply to me. The essay *Wagner in Bayreuth* is a vision of my own future; on the other hand, my most secret history, my development, is written down in *Schopenhauer as Educator.* But, above all, the *vow* I made I What I am to-day, the place I now hold—at a height from which I speak no longer with words but with thunderbolts!—oh, how far I was from all this in those days! But I saw the land—I did not deceive myself for one moment as to the way, the sea, the danger—*and* success! The great calm in promising, this happy prospect of a future which must not remain only a promise!—In this book every word has been lived, profoundly and intimately; the most painful things are not lacking in it; it contains words which are positively running with blood. But a wind of great freedom blows over the whole; even its wounds do not constitute an objection. As to what I understand by being a philosopher,—that is to say, a terrible explosive in the presence of which everything is in danger; as to how I sever my idea of the philosopher by miles from that other idea of him which includes even a Kant, not to speak of the academic “ruminators” and other professors of philosophy,—concerning all these things this essay provides invaluable information, even granting that at bottom, it is not “Schopenhauer as Educator” but “Nietzsche as Educator,” who speaks his sentiments in it. Considering that, in those days, my trade was that of a scholar, and perhaps, also, that I understood my trade, the piece of austere scholar psychology which suddenly makes its appearance in this essay is not without importance: it expresses the feeling of distance, and my profound certainty regarding what was my real life-task, and what were merely means, intervals, and accessory work to me. My wisdom consists in my having been many things, and in many places, in order to become one thing—in order to be able to attain to one thing. It was part of my fate to be a scholar for a while.

“Human, All-Too-Human”

1

Human all-too-Human, with its two sequels, is the memorial of a crisis. It is called a book for free spirits: almost every sentence in it is the expression of a triumph—by means of it I purged myself of everything in me which was foreign to my nature. Idealism is foreign to me: the title of the book means: “Where ye see ideal things I see—human, alas! all-too-human things!” ... I know men better. The word “free spirit” in this book must not be understood as anything else than a spirit that has become free, that has once more taken possession of itself. My tone, the pitch of my voice, has completely changed; the book will be thought clever, cool, and at times both hard and scornful. A certain spirituality, of noble taste, seems to be ever struggling to dominate a passionate torrent at its feet. In this respect there is some sense in the fact that it was the hundredth anniversary of Voltaire’s death that served, so to speak, as an excuse for the publication of the book as early as 1878. For Voltaire, as the opposite of every one who wrote after him, was above all a grandee of the intellect; precisely what I am also. The name of Voltaire on one of my writings—that was verily a step forward—in my direction.... Looking into this book a little more closely, you perceive a pitiless spirit who knows all the secret hiding-places in which ideals are wont to skulk—where they find their dungeons, and, as it were, their last refuge. With a torch in my hand, the light of which is not by any means a flickering one, I illuminate this nether world with beams that cut like blades. It is war, but war without powder and smoke, without warlike attitudes, without pathos and contorted limbs—all these things would still be “idealism.” One error after the other is quietly laid upon ice; the ideal is not refuted,—it freezes. Here, for instance, “genius” freezes; round the corner the “saint” freezes; under a thick icicle the “hero” freezes; and in the end “faith” itself freezes. So-called “conviction” and also “pity” are considerably cooled—and almost everywhere the “thing in itself” is freezing to death.

2

This book was begun during the first musical festival at Bayreuth; a feeling of profound strangeness towards everything that surrounded me there, is one of its first conditions. He who has any notion of the visions which even at that time had flitted across my path, will be able to guess what I felt when one day I came to my senses in Bayreuth. It was just as if I had been dreaming. Where on earth was I? I recognised nothing that I saw; I scarcely recognised Wagner. It was in vain that I called up reminiscences. Tribschen—remote island of bliss: not the shadow of a resemblance! The incomparable days devoted to the laying of the first stone, the small group of the initiated who celebrated them, and who were far from lacking fingers for the handling of delicate things: not the shadow of a resemblance! *What had happened?*—Wagner had been translated into German! The Wagnerite had become master of Wagner!—*German* art! the German master! German beer!... We who know only too well the kind of refined artists and cosmopolitanism in taste, to which alone Wagner’s art can appeal, were beside ourselves at the sight of Wagner bedecked with German virtues. I think I know the Wagnerite, I have experienced three generations of them, from Brendel of blessed memory, who confounded Wagner with Hegel, to the “idealists” of the *Bayreuth Gazette,* who confound Wagner with themselves,—I have been the recipient of every kind of confession about Wagner, from “beautiful souls.” My kingdom for just one intelligent word I—In very

truth, a blood-curdling company! Nohl, Pohl, and *Kohl*[14] and others of their kidney to infinity! There was not a single abortion that was lacking among them—no, not even the anti-Semite.—Poor Wagner! Into whose hands had he fallen? If only he had gone into a herd of swine! But among Germans! Some day, for the edification of posterity, one ought really to have a genuine Bayreuthian stuffed, or, better still, preserved in spirit,—for it is precisely spirit that is lacking in this quarter,—with this inscription at the foot of the jar: "A sample of the spirit whereon the 'German Empire' was founded." ... But enough! In the middle of the festivities I suddenly packed my trunk and left the place for a few weeks, despite the fact that a charming Parisian lady sought to comfort me; I excused myself to Wagner simply by means of a fatalistic telegram. In a little spot called Klingenbrunn, deeply buried in the recesses of the Bohmerwald, I carried my melancholy and my contempt of Germans about with me like an illness—and, from time to time, under the general title of "The Plough-share," I wrote a sentence or two down in my note-book, nothing but severe psychological stuff, which it is possible may have found its way into *Human, all-too-Human.*

3

That which had taken place in me, then, was not only a breach with Wagner—I was suffering from a general aberration of my instincts, of which a mere isolated blunder, whether it were Wagner or my professorship at Bâle, was nothing more than a symptom. I was seized with a fit of impatience with myself; I saw that it was high time that I should turn my thoughts upon my own lot. In a trice I realised, with appalling clearness, how much time had already been squandered—how futile and how senseless my whole existence as a philologist appeared by the side of my life-task. I was ashamed of this false modesty.... Ten years were behind me, during which, to tell the truth, the nourishment of my spirit had been at a standstill, during which I had added not a single useful fragment to my knowledge, and had forgotten countless things in the pursuit of a hotch-potch of dry-as-dust scholarship. To crawl with meticulous care and short-sighted eyes through old Greek metricians—that is what I had come to!... Moved to pity I saw myself quite thin, quite emaciated: realities were only too plainly absent from my stock of knowledge, and what the "idealities" were worth the devil alone knew! A positively burning thirst overcame me: and from that time forward I have done literally nothing else than study physiology, medicine, and natural science—I even returned to the actual study of history only when my life-task compelled me to. It was at that time, too, that I first divined the relation between an instinctively repulsive occupation, a so-called vocation, which is the last thing to which one is "called" and that need of lulling a feeling of emptiness and hunger, by means of an art which is a narcotic—by means of Wagner's art, for instance. After looking carefully about me, I have discovered that a large number of young men are all in the same state of distress: one kind of unnatural practice perforce leads to another. In Germany, or rather, to avoid all ambiguity, in the Empire,[15] only too many are condemned to determine their choice too soon, and then to pine away beneath a burden that they can no longer throw off.... Such creatures crave for Wagner as for an opiate,—they are thus able to forget themselves, to be rid of themselves for a moment.... What am I saying!—for five or six hours.

4

At this time my instincts turned resolutely against any further yielding or following on my part, and any further misunderstanding of myself. Every kind of life, the most unfavourable

[14] Nohl and Pohl were both writers on music; Kohl, however, which literally means cabbage, is a slang expression, denoting superior nonsense.—TR.
[15] Needless to say, Nietzsche distinguishes between Bismarckian Germany and that other Germany—Austria, Switzerland, and the Baltic Provinces—where the German language is also spoken.—TR.

circumstances, illness, poverty—anything seemed to me preferable to that undignified "selfishness" into which I had fallen; in the first place, thanks to my ignorance and youth, and in which I had afterwards remained owing to laziness—the so-called "sense of duty." At this juncture there came to my help, in a way that I cannot sufficiently admire, and precisely at the right time, that evil heritage which I derive from my father's side of the family, and which, at bottom, is no more than a predisposition to die young. Illness slowly liberated me from the toils, it spared me any sort of sudden breach, any sort of violent and offensive step. At that time I lost not a particle of the good will of others, but rather added to my store. Illness likewise gave me the right completely to reverse my mode of life; it not only allowed, it actually commanded, me to forget; it bestowed upon me the necessity of lying still, of having leisure, of waiting, and of exercising patience.... But all this means thinking!... The state of my eyes alone put an end to all book-wormishness, or, in plain English—philology: I was thus delivered from books; for years I ceased from reading, and this was the greatest boon I ever conferred upon myself! That nethermost self, which was, as it were, entombed, and which had grown dumb because it had been forced to listen perpetually to other selves (for that is what reading means!), slowly awakened; at first it was shy and doubtful, but at last it *spoke again* Never have I rejoiced more over my condition than during the sickest and most painful moments of my life. You have only to examine *The Dawn of Day,* or, perhaps, *The Wanderer and his Shadow,*[16] in order to understand what this "return to myself" actually meant: in itself it was the highest kind of recovery!... My cure was simply the result of it.

5

Human, all-too-Human, this monument of a course of vigorous self-discipline, by means of which I put an abrupt end to all the "Superior Bunkum," "Idealism," "Beautiful Feelings," and other effeminacies that had percolated into my being, was written principally in Sorrento; it was finished and given definite shape during a winter at Bâle, under conditions far less favourable than those in Sorrento. Truth to tell, it was Peter Gast, at that time a student at the University of Bâle, and a devoted friend of mine, who was responsible for the book. With my head wrapped in bandages, and extremely painful, I dictated while he wrote and corrected as he went along—to be accurate, he was the real composer, whereas I was only the author. When the completed book ultimately reached me,—to the great surprise of the serious invalid I then was,—I sent, among others, two copies to Bayreuth. Thanks to a miraculous flash of intelligence on the part of chance, there reached me precisely at the same time a splendid copy of the *Parsifal* text, with the following inscription from Wagner's pen: "To his dear friend Friedrich Nietzsche, from Richard Wagner, Ecclesiastical Councillor." At this crossing of the two books I seemed to hear an ominous note. Did it not sound as if two swords had crossed? At all events we both felt this was so, for each of us remained silent. At about this time the first Bayreuth Pamphlets appeared: and I then understood the move on my part for which it was high time. Incredible! Wagner had become pious.

6

My attitude to myself at that time (1876), and the unearthly certitude with which I grasped my life-task and all its world-historic consequences, is well revealed throughout the book, but more particularly in one very significant passage, despite the fact that, with my instinctive cunning, I once more circumvented the use of the little word "I,"—not however, this time, in order to shed world-historic glory on the names of Schopenhauer and Wagner, but on that of another of my friends, the excellent Dr. Paul Rée—fortunately much too acute a creature to be deceived—others were less subtle. Among my readers I have a number of hopeless people, the typical German professor for instance, who can always be recognised from the fact that,

[16] *Human, all-too-Human,* Part II. in this edition.—TR.

judging from the passage in question, he feels compelled to regard the whole book as a sort of superior Realism. As a matter of fact it contradicts five or six of my friend's utterances: only read the introduction to *The Genealogy of Morals* on this question.—The passage above referred to reads: "What, after all, is the principal axiom to which the boldest and coldest thinker, the author of the book "*On the Origin of Moral Sensations*" (read Nietzsche, the first Immoralist), "has attained by means of his incisive and decisive analysis of human actions? 'The moral man,' he says is no nearer to the intelligible (metaphysical) world than is the physical man, for there is no intelligible world.' This theory, hardened and sharpened under the hammer-blow of historical knowledge" (read *The Transvaluation of all Values*), "may some time or other, perhaps in some future period,—1890!—serve as the axe which is applied to the root of the 'metaphysical need' of man,—whether more as a blessing than a curse to the general welfare it is not easy to say; but in any case as a theory with the most important consequences, at once fruitful and terrible, and looking into the world with that Janus-face which all great knowledge possesses."[17]

[17] *Human, all-too-Human,* vol. i. Aph. 37.

"The Dawn Of Day: Thoughts About Morality As A Prejudice"

1

With this book I open my campaign against morality. Not that it is at all redolent of powder—you will find quite other and much nicer smells in it, provided that you have any keenness in your nostrils. There is nothing either of light or of heavy artillery in its composition, and if its general end be a negative one, its means are not so—means out of which the end follows like a logical conclusion, *not* like a cannon-shot. And if the reader takes leave of this book with a feeling of timid caution in regard to everything which has hitherto been honoured and even worshipped under the name of morality, it does not alter the fact that there is not one negative word, not one attack, and not one single piece of malice in the whole work—on the contrary, it lies in the sunshine, smooth and happy, like a marine animal, basking in the sun between two rocks. For, after all, I was this marine animal: almost every sentence in the book was thought out, or rather *caught,* among that medley of rocks in the neighbourhood of Genoa, where I lived quite alone, and exchanged secrets with the ocean. Even to this day, when by chance I happen to turn over the leaves of this book, almost every sentence seems to me like a hook by means of which I draw something incomparable out of the depths; its whole skin quivers with delicate shudders of recollection. This book is conspicuous for no little art in gently catching things which whisk rapidly and silently away, moments which I call godlike lizards—not with the cruelty of that young Greek god who simply transfixed the poor little beast; but nevertheless with something pointed—with a pen. "There are so many dawns which have not yet shed their light"—this Indian maxim is written over the doorway of this book. Where does its author seek that new morning, that delicate red, as yet undiscovered, with which another day—ah! a whole series of days, a whole world of new days!—will begin? In the *Transvaluation of all Values,* in an emancipation from all moral values, in a saying of yea, and in an attitude of trust, to all that which hitherto has been forbidden, despised, and damned. This yea-saying book projects its light, its love, its tenderness, over all evil things, it restores to them their soul, their clear conscience, and their superior right and privilege to exist on earth. Morality is not assailed, it simply ceases to be considered. This book closes with the word "or?"—it is the only book which closes with an "or?".

2

My life-task is to prepare for humanity one supreme moment in which it can come to its senses, a Great Noon in which it will turn its gaze backwards and forwards, in which it will step from under the yoke of accident and of priests, and for the first time set the question of the Why and Wherefore of humanity as a whole—this life-task naturally follows out of the conviction that mankind does *not* get on the right road of its own accord, that it is by no means divinely ruled, but rather that it is precisely under the cover of its most holy valuations that the instinct of negation, of corruption, and of degeneration has held such a seductive sway. The question concerning the origin of moral valuations is therefore a matter of the highest importance to me because it determines the future of mankind. The demand made upon us to believe that everything is really in the best hands, that a certain book, the Bible, gives us the definite and comforting assurance that there is a Providence that wisely rules the fate of man,—when translated back into reality amounts simply to this, namely, the will to stifle the truth which maintains the reverse of all this, which is that hitherto man has been in

the *worst possible* hands, and that he has been governed by the physiologically botched, the men of cunning and burning revengefulness, and the so-called “saints”—those slanderers of the world and traducers of humanity. The definite proof of the fact that the priest (including the priest in disguise, the philosopher) has become master, not only within a certain limited religious community, but everywhere, and that the morality of decadence, the will to nonentity, has become morality *per se,* is to be found in this: that altruism is now an absolute value, and egoism is regarded with hostility everywhere. He who disagrees with me on this point, I regard as infected. But all the world disagrees with me. To a physiologist a like antagonism between values admits of no doubt. If the most insignificant organ within the body neglects, however slightly, to assert with absolute certainty its self-preservative powers, its recuperative claims, and its egoism, the whole system degenerates. The physiologist insists upon the removal of degenerated parts, he denies all fellow-feeling for such parts, and has not the smallest feeling of pity for them. But the desire of the priest is precisely the degeneration of the whole of mankind; hence his preservation of that which is degenerate—this is what his dominion costs humanity. What meaning have those lying concepts, those handmaids of morality, “Soul,” “Spirit,” “Free will,” “God,” if their aim is not the physiological ruin of mankind? When earnestness is diverted from the instincts that aim at self-preservation and an increase of bodily energy, *i.e.* at an *increase of life*; when anæmia is raised to an ideal and the contempt of the body is construed as “the salvation of the soul,” what is all this if it is not a recipe for decadence? Loss of ballast, resistance offered to natural instincts, selflessness, in fact—this is what has hitherto been known as morality. With *The Dawn of Day* I first engaged in a struggle against the morality of self-renunciation.

"Joyful Wisdom: La Gaya Scienza"

1

Dawn of Day is a yea-saying book, profound, but clear and kindly. The same applies once more and in the highest degree to *La Gaya Scienza:* in almost every sentence of this book, profundity and playfulness go gently hand in hand. A verse which expresses my gratitude for the most wonderful month of January which I have ever lived—the whole book is a gift—sufficiently reveals the abysmal depths from which "wisdom" has here become joyful.

"Thou who with cleaving fiery lances
The stream of my soul from its ice dost free,
Till with a rush and a roar it advances
To enter with glorious hoping the sea:
Brighter to see and purer ever,
Free in the bonds of thy sweet constraint,—
So it praises thy wondrous endeavour,
January, thou beauteous saint!"[18]

Who can be in any doubt as to what "glorious hoping" means here, when he has realised the diamond beauty of the first of Zarathustra's words as they appear in a glow of light at the close of the fourth book? Or when he reads the granite sentences at the end of the third book, wherein a fate for all times is first given a formula? The songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird, which, for the most part, were written in Sicily, remind me quite forcibly of that Provencal notion of "*Gaya Scienza,*" of that union of *singer, knight, and free spirit,* which distinguishes that wonderfully early culture of the Provencals from all ambiguous cultures. The last poem of all, "To the Mistral,"—an exuberant dance song in which, if you please, the new spirit dances freely upon the corpse of morality,—is a perfect Provençalism.

[18] Translated for *Joyful Wisdom* by Paul V. Cohn.—TR.

“Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book For All And None”

1

I now wish to relate the history of *Zarathustra.* The fundamental idea of the work, the *Eternal Recurrence,* the highest formula of a Yea-saying to life that can ever be attained, was first conceived in the month of August 1881. I made a note of the idea on a sheet of paper, with the postscript: “Six thousand feet beyond man and time.” That day I happened to be wandering through the woods alongside of the Lake of Silvaplana, and I halted not far from Surlei, beside a huge rock that towered aloft like a pyramid. It was then that the thought struck me. Looking back now, I find that exactly two months before this inspiration I had an omen of its coming in the form of a sudden and decisive change in my tastes—more particularly in music. The whole of *Zarathustra* might perhaps be classified under the rubric music. At all events, the essential condition of its production was a second birth within me of the art of hearing. In Recoaro, a small mountain resort near Vicenza, where I spent the spring of 1881, I and my friend and maestro, Peter Gast—who was also one who had been born again, discovered that the phœnix music hovered over us, in lighter and brighter plumage than it had ever worn before. If, therefore, I now calculate from that day forward the sudden production of the book, under the most unlikely circumstances, in February 1883,—the last part, out of which I quoted a few lines in my preface, was written precisely in the hallowed hour when Richard Wagner gave up the ghost in Venice,—I come to the conclusion that the period of gestation covered eighteen months. This period of exactly eighteen months, might suggest, at least to Buddhists, that I am in reality a female elephant The interval was devoted to the *Gaya Scienza,* which contains hundreds of indications of the proximity of something unparalleled; for, after all, it shows the beginning of *Zarathustra,* since it presents *Zarathustra’s* fundamental thought in the last aphorism but one of the fourth book. To this interval also belongs that *Hymn to Life* (for a mixed choir and orchestra), the score of which was published in Leipzig two years ago by E. W. Fritsch, and which gave perhaps no slight indication of my spiritual state during this year, in which the essentially yea-saying pathos, which I call the tragic pathos, completely filled me heart and limb. One day people will sing it to my memory. The text, let it be well understood, as there is some misunderstanding abroad on this point, is not by me; it was the astounding inspiration of a young Russian lady, Miss Lou von Salome, with whom I was then on friendly terms. He who is in any way able to make some sense of the last words of the poem, will divine why I preferred and admired it: there is greatness in them. Pain is not regarded as an objection to existence: “And if thou hast no bliss now left to crown me—Lead on! Thou hast thy Sorrow still.”

Maybe that my music is also great in this passage. (The last note of the oboe, by the bye, is C sharp, not C. The latter is a misprint.) During the following winter, I was living on that charmingly peaceful Gulf of Rapallo, not far from Genoa, which cuts inland between Chiavari and Cape Porto Fino. My health was not very good; the winter was cold and exceptionally rainy; and the small *albergo* in which I lived was so close to the water that at night my sleep was disturbed if the sea was rough. These circumstances were surely the very reverse of favourable; and yet, in spite of it all, and as if in proof of my belief that everything decisive comes to life in defiance of every obstacle, it was precisely during this winter and in the midst of these unfavourable circumstances that my *Zarathustra* originated. In the morning

I used to start out in a southerly direction up the glorious road to Zoagli, which rises up through a forest of pines and gives one a view far out to sea. In the afternoon, or as often as my health allowed, I walked round the whole bay from Santa Margherita to beyond Porto Fino. This spot affected me all the more deeply because it was so dearly loved by the Emperor Frederick III. In the autumn of 1886 I chanced to be there again when he was revisiting this small forgotten world of happiness for the last time. It was on these two roads that all *Zarathustra* came to me, above all, Zarathustra himself as a type—I ought rather to say that it was on these walks that *he waylaid me*.

2

In order to understand this type, you must first be quite clear concerning its fundamental physiological condition: this condition is what I call *great healthiness.* In regard to this idea I cannot make my meaning more plain or more personal than I have done already in one of the last aphorisms (No. 382) of the fifth book of the *Gaya Scienza*: “We new, nameless, and unfathomable creatures,” so reads the passage, “we firstlings of a future still unproved—we who have a new end in view also require new means to that end, that is to say, a new healthiness, a stronger, keener, tougher, bolder, and merrier healthiness than any that has existed heretofore. He who longs to feel in his own soul the whole range of values and aims that have prevailed on earth until his day, and to sail round all the coasts of this ideal ‘Mediterranean Sea’; who, from the adventures of his own inmost experience, would fain know how it feels to be a conqueror and discoverer of the ideal;—as also how it is with the artist, the saint, the legislator, the sage, the scholar, the man of piety and the godlike anchorite of yore;—such a man requires one thing above all for his purpose, and that is, *great healthiness*—such healthiness as he not only possesses, but also constantly acquires and must acquire, because he is continually sacrificing it again, and is compelled to sacrifice it! And now, therefore, after having been long on the way, we Argonauts of the ideal, whose pluck is greater than prudence would allow, and who are often shipwrecked and bruised, but, as I have said, healthier than people would like to admit, dangerously healthy, and for ever recovering our health—it would seem as if we had before us, as a reward for all our toils, a country still undiscovered, the horizon of which no one has yet seen, a beyond to every country and every refuge of the ideal that man has ever known, a world so overflowing with beauty, strangeness, doubt, terror, and divinity, that both our curiosity and our lust of possession are frantic with eagerness. Alas! how in the face of such vistas, and with such burning desire in our conscience and consciousness, could we still be content with *the man of the present day*? This is bad indeed; but, that we should regard his worthiest aims and hopes with ill-concealed amusement, or perhaps give them no thought at all, is inevitable. Another ideal now leads us on, a wonderful, seductive ideal, full of danger, the pursuit of which we should be loath to urge upon any one, because we are not so ready to acknowledge any one’s *right to it:* the ideal of a spirit who plays ingenuously (that is to say, involuntarily, and as the outcome of superabundant energy and power) with everything that, hitherto, has been called holy, good, inviolable, and divine; to whom even the loftiest thing that the people have with reason made their measure of value would be no better than a danger, a decay, and an abasement, or at least a relaxation and temporary forgetfulness of self: the ideal of a humanly superhuman well-being and goodwill, which often enough will seem inhuman—as when, for instance, it stands beside all past earnestness on earth, and all past solemnities in hearing, speech, tone, look, morality, and duty, as their most lifelike and unconscious parody—but with which, nevertheless, *great earnestness* perhaps alone begins, the first note of interrogation is affixed, the fate of the soul changes, the hour hand moves, and tragedy begins.”

3

Has any one at the end of the nineteenth century any distinct notion of what poets of a stronger age understood by the word inspiration? If not, I will describe it. If one had the smallest vestige of superstition left in one, it would hardly be possible completely to set aside the idea that one is the mere incarnation, mouthpiece, or medium of an almighty power. The idea of revelation, in the sense that something which profoundly convulses and upsets one becomes suddenly visible and audible with indescribable certainty and accuracy—describes the simple fact. One hears—one does not seek; one takes—one does not ask who gives: a thought suddenly flashes up like lightning, it comes with necessity, without faltering—I have never had any choice in the matter. There is an ecstasy so great that the immense strain of it is sometimes relaxed by a flood of tears, during which one's steps now involuntarily rush and anon involuntarily lag. There is the feeling that one is utterly out of hand, with the very distinct consciousness of an endless number of fine thrills and titillations descending to one's very toes;—there is a depth of happiness in which the most painful and gloomy parts do not act as antitheses to the rest, but are produced and required as necessary shades of colour in such an overflow of light. There is an instinct for rhythmic relations which embraces a whole world of forms (length, the need of a wide-embracing rhythm, is almost the measure of the force of an inspiration, a sort of counterpart to its pressure and tension). Everything happens quite involuntarily, as if in a tempestuous outburst of freedom, of absoluteness, of power and divinity. The involuntary nature of the figures and similes is the most remarkable thing; one loses all perception of what is imagery and metaphor; everything seems to present itself as the readiest, the truest, and simplest means of expression. It actually seems, to use one of Zarathustra's own phrases, as if all things came to one, and offered themselves as similes. ("Here do all things come caressingly to thy discourse and flatter thee, for they would fain ride upon thy back. On every simile thou ridest here unto every truth. Here fly open unto thee all the speech and word shrines of the world, here would all existence become speech, here would all Becoming learn of thee how to speak.") This is my experience of inspiration. I do not doubt but that I should have to go back thousands of years before I could find another who could say to me: "It is mine also!"

4

For a few weeks afterwards I lay an invalid in Genoa. Then followed a melancholy spring in Rome, where I only just managed to live—and this was no easy matter. This city, which is absolutely unsuited to the poet-author of *Zarathustra,* and for the choice of which I was not responsible, made me inordinately miserable. I tried to leave it. I wanted to go to Aquila—the opposite of Rome in every respect, and actually founded in a spirit of hostility towards that city, just as I also shall found a city some day, as a memento of an atheist and genuine enemy of the Church, a person very closely related to me, the great Hohenstaufen, the Emperor Frederick II. But Fate lay behind it all: I had to return again to Rome. In the end I was obliged to be satisfied with the Piazza Barberini, after I had exerted myself in vain to find an anti-Christian quarter. I fear that on one occasion, to avoid bad smells as much as possible, I actually inquired at the Palazzo del Quirinale whether they could not provide a quiet room for a philosopher. In a chamber high above the Piazza just mentioned, from which one obtained a general view of Rome, and could hear the fountains plashing far below, the loneliest of all songs was composed—"The Night-Song." About this time I was obsessed by an unspeakably sad melody, the refrain of which I recognised in the affords, "dead through immortality," ... In the summer, finding myself once more in the sacred place where the first thought of *Zarathustra* flashed like a light across my mind, I conceived the second part. Ten days sufficed. Neither for the second, the first, nor the third part, have I required a day longer. In the ensuing winter, beneath the halcyon sky of Nice, which then for the first time poured its light into my life, I found the third *Zarathustra*—and came to the end of my task: the whole

having occupied me scarcely a year. Many hidden corners and heights in the country round about Nice are hallowed for me by moments that I can never forget. That decisive chapter, entitled "Old and New Tables," was composed during the arduous ascent from the station to Eza—that wonderful Moorish village in the rocks. During those moments when my creative energy flowed most plentifully, my muscular activity was always greatest. The body is inspired: let us waive the question of "soul." I might often have been seen dancing in those days, and I could then walk for seven or eight hours on end over the hills without a suggestion of fatigue. I slept well and laughed a good deal—I was perfectly robust and patient.

5

With the exception of these periods of industry lasting ten days, the years I spent during the production of *Zarathustra,* and thereafter, were for me years of unparalleled distress. A man pays dearly for being immortal: to this end he must die many times over during his life. There is such a thing as what I call the rancour of greatness: everything great, whether a work or a deed, once it is completed, turns immediately against its author. The very fact that he is its author makes him weak at this time. He can no longer endure his deed. He can no longer look it full in the face. To have something at one's back which one could never have willed, something to which the knot of human destiny is attached—and to be forced thenceforward to bear it on one's shoulders! Why, it almost crushes one! The rancour of greatness! A somewhat different experience is the uncanny silence that reigns about one. Solitude has seven skins which nothing can penetrate. One goes among men; one greets friends: but these things are only new deserts, the looks of those one meets no longer bear a greeting. At the best one encounters a sort of revolt. This feeling of revolt, I suffered, in varying degrees of intensity, at the hands of almost every one who came near me; it would seem that nothing inflicts a deeper wound than suddenly to make one's distance felt. Those noble natures are scarce who know not how to live unless they can revere. A third thing is the absurd susceptibility of the skin to small pin-pricks, a kind of helplessness in the presence of all small things. This seems to me a necessary outcome of the appalling expenditure of all defensive forces, which is the first condition of every *creative* act, of every act which proceeds from the most intimate, most secret, and most concealed recesses of a man's being. The small defensive forces are thus, as it were, suspended, and no fresh energy reaches them. I even think it probable that one does not digest so well, that one is less willing to move, and that one is much too open to sensations of coldness and suspicion; for, in a large number of cases, suspicion is merely a blunder in etiology. On one occasion when I felt like this I became conscious of the proximity of a herd of cows, some time before I could possibly have seen it with my eyes, simply owing to a return in me of milder and more humane sentiments: *they* communicated warmth to me....

6

This work stands alone. Do not let us mention the poets in the same breath; nothing perhaps has ever been produced out of such a superabundance of strength. My concept "Dionysian" here became the *highest* deed; compared with it everything that other men have done seems poor and limited. The fact that a Goethe or a Shakespeare would not for an instant have known how to take breath in this atmosphere of passion and of the heights; the fact that by the side of Zarathustra, Dante is no more than a believer, and not one who first *creates* the truth—that is to say, not a world-ruling spirit, a *Fate*; the fact that the poets of the Veda were priests and not even fit to unfasten Zarathustra's sandal—all this is the least of things, and gives no idea of the distance, of the azure solitude, in which this work dwells. Zarathustra has an eternal right to say: "I draw around me circles and holy boundaries. Ever fewer are they

that mount with me to ever loftier heights. I build me a mountain range of ever holier mountains." If all the spirit and goodness of every great soul were collected together, the whole could not create a single one of Zarathustra's discourses. The ladder upon which he rises and descends is of boundless length; he has seen further, he has willed further, and *gone* further than any other man. There is contradiction in every word that he utters, this most yea-saying of all spirits. Through him all contradictions are bound up into a new unity. The loftiest and the basest powers of human nature, the sweetest, the lightest, and the most terrible, rush forth from out one spring with everlasting certainty. Until his coming no one knew what was height, or depth, and still less what was truth. There is not a single passage in this revelation of truth which had already been anticipated and divined by even the greatest among men. Before Zarathustra there was no wisdom, no probing of the soul, no art of speech: in his book, the most familiar and most vulgar thing utters unheard-of words. The sentence quivers with passion. Eloquence has become music. Forks of lightning are hurled towards futures of which no one has ever dreamed before. The most powerful use of parables that has yet existed is poor beside it, and mere child's-play compared with this return of language to the nature of imagery. See how Zarathustra goes down from the mountain and speaks the kindest words to every one! See with what delicate fingers he touches his very adversaries, the priests, and how he suffers with them from themselves! Here, at every moment, man is overcome, and the concept "Superman" becomes the greatest reality,—out of sight, almost far away beneath him, lies all that which heretofore has been called great in man. The halcyonic brightness, the light feet, the presence of wickedness and exuberance throughout, and all that is the essence of the type Zarathustra, was never dreamt of before as a prerequisite of greatness. In precisely these limits of space and in this accessibility to opposites Zarathustra feels himself the *highest of all living things*: and when you hear how he defines this highest, you will give up trying to find his equal.

"The soul which hath the longest ladder and can step down deepest,

"The vastest soul that can run and stray and rove furthest in its own domain,

"The most necessary soul, that out of desire flingeth itself to chance,

"The stable soul that plungeth into Becoming, the possessing soul that must needs taste of willing and longing,

"The soul that flyeth from itself, and over-taketh itself in the widest circle,

"The wisest soul that folly exhorteth most sweetly,

"The most self-loving soul, in whom all things have their rise, their ebb and flow."

But this is the very idea of Dionysus. Another consideration leads to this idea. The psychological problem presented by the type of Zarathustra is, how can he, who in an unprecedented manner says no, and *acts* no, in regard to all that which has been affirmed hitherto, remain nevertheless a yea-saying spirit? how can he who bears the heaviest destiny on his shoulders and whose very life-task is a fatality, yet be the brightest and the most transcendental of spirits—for Zarathustra is a dancer? how can he who has the hardest and most terrible grasp of reality, and who has thought the most "abysmal thoughts," nevertheless avoid conceiving these things as objections to existence, or even as objections to the eternal recurrence of existence?—how is it that on the contrary he finds reasons for *being himself* the eternal affirmation of all things, "the tremendous and unlimited saying of Yea and Amen"?... "Into every abyss do I bear the benediction of my yea to Life." ... But this, once more, is precisely the idea of Dionysus.

7

What language will such a spirit speak, when he speaks unto his soul? The language of the *dithyramb.* I am the inventor of the dithyramb. Hearken unto the manner in which Zarathustra speaks to his soul *Before Sunrise* (iii. 48). Before my time such emerald joys and divine tenderness had found no tongue. Even the profoundest melancholy of such a Dionysus takes shape as a dithyramb. As an example of this I take "The Night-Song,"—the immortal plaint of one who, thanks to his superabundance of light and power, thanks to the sun within him, is condemned never to love.

"It is night: now do all gushing springs raise their voices. And my soul too is a gushing spring.

"It is night: now only do all lovers burst into song. And my soul too is the song of a lover.

"Something unquenched and unquenchable is within me, that would raise its voice. A craving for love is within me, which itself speaketh the language of love.

"Light am I: would that I were night! But this is my loneliness, that I am begirt with light.

"Alas, why am I not dark and like unto the night! How joyfully would I then suck at the breasts of light!

"And even you would I bless, ye twinkling starlets and glow-worms on high! and be blessed in the gifts of your light.

"But in mine own light do I live, ever back into myself do I drink the flames I send forth.

"I know not the happiness of the hand stretched forth to grasp; and oft have I dreamt that stealing must be more blessed than taking.

"Wretched am I that my hand may never rest from giving: an envious fate is mine that I see expectant eyes and nights made bright with longing.

"Oh, the wretchedness of all them that give! Oh, the clouds that cover the face of my sun! That craving for desire! that burning hunger at the end of the feast!

"They take what I give them; but do I touch their soul? A gulf is there 'twixt giving and taking; and the smallest gulf is the last to be bridged.

"An appetite is born from out my beauty: would that I might do harm to them that I fill with light; would that I might rob them of the gifts I have given:—thus do I thirst for wickedness.

"To withdraw my hand when their hand is ready stretched forth like the waterfall that wavers, wavers even in its fall:—thus do I thirst for wickedness.

"For such vengeance doth my fulness yearn: to such tricks doth my loneliness give birth.

"My joy in giving died with the deed. By its very fulness did my virtue grow weary of itself.

"He who giveth risketh to lose his shame; he that is ever distributing groweth callous in hand and heart therefrom.

"Mine eyes no longer melt into tears at the sight of the suppliant's shame; my hand hath become too hard to feel the quivering of laden hands.

"Whither have ye fled, the tears of mine eyes and the bloom of my heart? Oh, the solitude of all givers! Oh, the silence of all beacons!

"Many are the suns that circle in barren space; to all that is dark do they speak with their light—to me alone are they silent.

"Alas, this is the hatred of light for that which shineth: pitiless it runneth its course.

"Unfair in its inmost heart to that which shineth; cold toward suns,—thus doth every sun go its way.

"Like a tempest do the suns fly over their course: for such is their way. Their own unswerving will do they follow: that is their coldness.

"Alas, it is ye alone, ye creatures of gloom, ye spirits of the night, that take your warmth from that which shineth. Ye alone suck your milk and comfort from the udders of light.

"Alas, about me there is ice, my hand burneth itself against ice!

"Alas, within me is a thirst that thirsteth for your thirst!

"It is night: woe is me, that I must needs be light! And thirst after darkness! And loneliness!

"It is night: now doth my longing burst forth like a spring,—for speech do I long.

"It is night: now do all gushing springs raise their voices. And my soul too is a gushing spring.

"It is night: now only do all lovers burst into song. And my soul too is the song of a lover."

8

Such things have never been written, never been felt, never been *suffered:* only a God, only Dionysus suffers in this way. The reply to such a dithyramb on the sun's solitude in light would be Ariadne. ... Who knows, but I, who Ariadne is! To all such riddles no one heretofore had ever found an answer; I doubt even whether any one had ever seen a riddle here. One day Zarathustra severely determines his life-task—and it is also mine. Let no one misunderstand its meaning. It's a yea-saying to the point of justifying, to the point of redeeming even all that is past.

"I walk among men as among fragments of the future: of that future which I see.

"And all my creativeness and effort is but this, that I may be able to think and recast all these fragments and riddles and dismal accidents into one piece.

"And how could I bear to be a man, if man were not also a poet, a riddle reader, and a redeemer of chance!

"To redeem all the past, and to transform every 'it was' into 'thus would I have it'—that alone would be my salvation!"

In another passage he defines as strictly as possible what to him alone "man" can be,—not a subject for love nor yet for pity—Zarathustra became master even of his loathing of man: man is to him a thing unshaped, raw material, an ugly stone that needs the sculptor's chisel.

"No longer to will, no longer to value, no longer to create! Oh, that this great weariness may never be mine!

"Even in the lust of knowledge, I feel only the joy of my will to beget and to grow; and if there be innocence in my knowledge, it is because my procreative will is in it.

"Away from God and gods did this will lure me: what would there be to create if there were gods?

"But to man doth it ever drive me anew, my burning, creative will. Thus driveth it the hammer to the stone.

"Alas, ye men, within the stone there sleepeth an image for me, the image of all my dreams! Alas, that it should have to sleep in the hardest and ugliest stone!

"*Now rageth my hammer ruthlessly against its prison.* From the stone the fragments fly: what's that to me?

"I will finish it: for a shadow came unto me—the stillest and lightest thing on earth once came unto me!

"The beauty of the Superman came unto me as a shadow. Alas, my brethren! What are the—gods to me now?"

Let me call attention to one last point of view. The line in italics is my pretext for this remark. A Dionysian life-task needs the hardness of the hammer, and one of its first essentials is without doubt the *joy even of destruction.* The command, "Harden yourselves!" and the deep conviction that *all creators are hard,* is the really distinctive sign of a Dionysian nature.

Beyond Good And Evil: “The Prelude To A Philosophy Of The Future”

1

My work for the years that followed was prescribed as distinctly as possible. Now that the yea-saying part of my life-task was accomplished, there came the turn of the negative portion, both in word and deed: the transvaluation of all values that had existed hitherto, the great war,—the conjuring-up of the day when the fatal outcome of the struggle would be decided. Meanwhile, I had slowly to look about me for my peers, for those who, *out of strength,* would proffer me a helping hand in my work of destruction. From that time onward, all my writings are so much bait: maybe I understand as much about fishing as most people? If nothing was *caught,* it was not I who was at fault *There were no fish to come and bite.*

2

In all its essential points, this book (1886) is a criticism of *modernity,* embracing the modern sciences, arts, even politics, together with certain indications as to a type which would be the reverse of modern man, or as little like him as possible, a noble and yea-saying type. In this last respect the book is a *school for gentlemen*—the term *gentleman* being understood here in a much more spiritual and radical sense than it has implied hitherto. All those things of which the age is proud,—as, for instance, far-famed “objectivity,” “sympathy with all that suffers,” “the historical sense,” with its subjection to foreign tastes, with its lying-in-the-dust before *petits faits,* and the rage for science,—are shown to be the contradiction of the type recommended, and are regarded as almost ill-bred. If you remember that this book follows upon *Zarathustra,* you may possibly guess to what system of diet it owes its life. The eye which, owing to tremendous constraint, has become accustomed to see at a great distance,—*Zarathustra* is even more far-sighted than the Tsar,—is here forced to focus sharply that which is close at hand, the present time, the things that lie about him. In all the aphorisms and more particularly in the form of this book, the reader will find the same *voluntary* turning away from those instincts which made a *Zarathustra* a possible feat. Refinement in form, in aspiration, and in the art of keeping silent, are its more or less obvious qualities; psychology is handled with deliberate hardness and cruelty,—the whole book does not contain one single good-natured word.... All this sort of thing refreshes a man. Who can guess the kind of recreation that is necessary after such an expenditure of goodness as is to be found in *Zarathustra*? From a theological standpoint—now pay ye heed; for it is but on rare occasions that I speak as a theologian—it was God Himself who, at the end of His great work, coiled Himself up in the form of a serpent at the foot of the tree of knowledge. It was thus that He recovered from being a God.... He had made everything too beautiful.... The devil is simply God’s moment of idleness, on that seventh day.

“The Genealogy Of Morals: A Polemic”

The three essays which constitute this genealogy are, as regards expression, aspiration, and the art of the unexpected, perhaps the most curious things that have ever been written. Dionysus, as you know, is also the god of darkness. In each case the beginning is calculated to mystify; it is cool, scientific, even ironical, intentionally thrust to the fore, intentionally reticent. Gradually less calmness prevails; here and there a flash of lightning defines the horizon; exceedingly unpleasant truths break upon your ears from out remote distances with a dull, rumbling sound,—until very soon a fierce tempo is attained in which everything presses forward at a terrible degree of tension. At the end, in each case, amid fearful thunderclaps, a new truth shines out between thick clouds. The truth of the first essays the psychology of Christianity: the birth of Christianity out of the spirit of resentment, not, as is supposed, out of the “Spirit,”—in all its essentials, a counter-movement, the great insurrection against the dominion of noble values. The second essay contains the psychology of conscience: this is not, as you may believe, “the voice of God in man”; it is the instinct of cruelty, which turns inwards once it is unable to discharge itself outwardly. Cruelty is here exposed, for the first time, as one of the oldest and most indispensable elements in the foundation of culture. The third essay replies to the question as to the origin of the formidable power of the ascetic ideal, of the priest ideal, despite the fact that this ideal is essentially detrimental, that it is a will to nonentity and to decadence. Reply: it flourished not because God was active behind the priests, as is generally believed, but because it was a *faute de mieux*—from the fact that hitherto it has been the only ideal and has had no competitors. “For man prefers to aspire to nonentity than not to aspire at all.” But above all, until the time of *Zarathustra* there was no such thing as a counter-ideal. You have understood my meaning. Three decisive overtures on the part of a psychologist to a *Transvaluation of all Values.*—This book contains the first psychology of the priest.

“The Twilight Of The Idols: How To Philosophise With The Hammer”

1

This work—which covers scarcely one hundred and fifty pages, with its cheerful and fateful tone, like a laughing demon, and the production of which occupied so few days that I hesitate to give their number—is altogether an exception among books: there is no work more rich in substance, more independent, more upsetting—more wicked. If any one should desire to obtain a rapid sketch of how everything, before my time, was standing on its head, he should begin reading me in this book. That which is called “Idols” on the title page is simply the old truth that has been believed in hitherto. In plain English, *The Twilight of the Idols* means that the old truth is on its last legs.

2

There is no reality, no “ideality,” which has not been touched in this book (touched! what a cautious euphemism!). Not only the eternal idols, but also the youngest—that is to say, the most senile: modern ideas, for instance. A strong wind blows between the trees and in all directions fall the fruit—the truths. There is the waste of an all-too-rich autumn in this book: you trip over truths. You even crush some to death, there are too many of them. Those things that you can grasp, however, are quite unquestionable; they are irrevocable decrees. I alone have the criterion of “truths” in my possession. I alone *can* decide. It would seem as if a second consciousness had grown up in me, as if the “life-will” in me had thrown a light upon the downward path along which it has been running throughout the ages. The *downward path*—hitherto this had been called the road to “Truth.” All obscure impulse—”darkness and dismay”—is at an end, the “*good man*” was precisely he who was least aware of the proper way.[19] And, speaking in all earnestness, no one before me knew the proper way, the way upwards: only after my time could men once more find hope, life-tasks, and roads mapped out that lead to culture—*I am the joyful harbinger of this culture.* ... On this account alone I am also a fatality.

3

Immediately after the completion of the above-named work, and without letting even one day go by, I tackled the formidable task of the *Transvaluation* with a supreme feeling of pride which nothing could equal; and, certain at each moment of my immortality, I cut sign after sign upon tablets of brass with the sureness of Fate. The Preface came into being on 3rd September 1888. When, after having written it down, I went out into the open that morning, I was greeted by the most beautiful day I had ever seen in the Upper Engadine—clear, glowing with colour, and presenting all the contrasts and all the intermediary gradations between ice and the south. I left Sils-Maria only on the 20th of September. I had been forced to delay my departure owing to floods, and I was very soon, and for some days, the only visitor in this wonderful spot, on which my gratitude bestows the gift of an immortal name. After a journey that was full of incidents, and not without danger to life,—as for instance at Como, which was flooded when I reached it in the dead of night,—I got to Turin on the afternoon of the 21

[19] A witty reference to Goethe's well-known passage in the Prologue to *Faust*:—
"A good man, though in darkness and dismay,
May still be conscious of the proper way."
The words are spoken by the Lord.—TR.

st. Turin is the only suitable place for me, and it shall be my home henceforward. I took the same lodgings as I had occupied in the spring, 6111 Via Carlo Alberto, opposite the mighty Palazzo Carignano, in which Vittorio Emanuele was born; and I had a view of the Piazza Carlo Alberto and above it across to the hills. Without hesitating, or allowing myself to be disturbed for a single moment, I returned to my work, only the last quarter of which had still to be written. On the 30th September, tremendous triumph; the seventh day; the leisure of a god on the banks of the Po.[20] On the same day, I wrote the Preface to *The Twilight of the Idols,* the correction of the proofs of which provided me with recreation during the month of September. Never in my life have I experienced such an autumn; nor had I ever imagined that such things were possible on earth—a Claude Lorrain extended to infinity, each day equal to the last in its wild perfection.

[20] There is a wonderful promenade along the banks of the Po, for which Turin is famous, and of which Nietzsche was particularly fond.—TR.

"The Case Of Wagner: A Musician's Problem"

1

In order to do justice to this essay a man ought to suffer from the fate of music as from an open wound.—From what do I suffer when I suffer from the fate of music? From the fact that music has lost its world-transfiguring, yea-saying character—that it is decadent music and no longer the flute of Dionysus. Supposing, however, that the fate of music be as dear to man as his own life, because joy and suffering are alike bound up with it; then he will find this pamphlet comparatively mild and full of consideration. To be cheerful in such circumstances, and laugh good-naturedly with others at one's self,—*ridendodicere severum*[21] when the *verum dicere* would justify every sort of hardness,—is humanity itself. Who doubts that I, old artillery-man that I am, would be able if I liked to point my *heavy* guns at Wagner?—Everything decisive in this question I kept to myself—I have loved Wagner.—After all, an attack upon a more than usually subtle "unknown person" whom another would not have divined so easily, lies in the meaning and path of my life-task. Oh, I have still quite a number of other "unknown persons" to unmask besides a Cagliostro of Music! Above all, I have to direct an attack against the German people, who, in matters of the spirit, grow every day more indolent, poorer in instincts, and more *honest* who, with an appetite for which they are to be envied, continue to diet themselves on contradictions, and gulp down "Faith" in company with science, Christian love together with anti-Semitism, and the will to power (to the "Empire"), dished up with the gospel of the humble, without showing the slightest signs of indigestion. Fancy this absence of party-feeling in the presence of opposites! Fancy this gastric neutrality and "disinterestedness"! Behold this sense of justice in the German palate, which can grant equal rights to all,—which finds everything tasteful! Without a shadow of a doubt the Germans are idealists. When I was last in Germany, I found German taste striving to grant Wagner and the *Trumpeter of Sakkingen*[22] equal rights; while I myself witnessed the attempts of the people of Leipzig to do honour to one of the most genuine and most German of musicians,—using German here in the old sense of the word,—a man who was no mere German of the Empire, the master Heinrich Schütz, by founding a Liszt Society, the object of which was to cultivate and spread artful (*listige*[23]) Church music. Without a shadow of doubt the Germans are idealists.

2

But here nothing shall stop me from being rude, and from telling the Germans one or two unpleasant home truths: who else would do it if I did not? I refer to their laxity in matters historical. Not only have the Germans entirely lost the *breadth of vision* which enables one to grasp the course of culture and the values of culture; not only are they one and all political (or Church) puppets; but they have also actually *put a ban upon* this very breadth of vision. A man must first and foremost be "German," he must belong to "*the* race"; then only can he pass judgment upon all values and lack of values in history—then only can he establish them.... To be German is in itself an argument, "Germany, Germany above all,"[24] is a principle; the Germans stand for the "moral order of the universe" in history; compared with the Roman Empire, they are the up-holders of freedom; compared with the eighteenth

[21] The motto of *The Case of Wagner*.—TR.
[22] An opera by Nessler which was all the rage in Germany twenty years ago.—TR.
[23] Unfortunately it is impossible to render this play on the words in English.—TR.
[24] The German National Song (*Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*).—TR.

century, they are the restorers of morality, of the "Categorical Imperative." There is such a thing as the writing of history according to the lights of Imperial Germany; there is, I fear, anti-Semitic history—there is also history written with an eye to the Court, and Herr von Treitschke is not ashamed of himself. Quite recently an idiotic opinion *in historicis,* an observation of Vischer the Swabian æsthete, since happily deceased, made the round of the German newspapers as a "truth" to which every German *must assent* The observation was this: "The Renaissance *and* the Reformation only together constitute a whole—the æsthetic rebirth, and the moral rebirth." When I listen to such things, I lose all patience, and I feel inclined, I even feel it my duty, to tell the Germans, for once in a way, all that they have on their conscience. *Every great crime against culture for the last four centuries lies on their conscience....* And always for the same reason, always owing to their bottomless cowardice in the face of reality, which is also cowardice in the face of truth; always owing to the love of falsehood which has become almost instinctive in them—in short, "idealism." It was the Germans who caused Europe to lose the fruits, the whole meaning of her last period of greatness—the period of the Renaissance. At a moment when a higher order of values, values that were noble, that said yea to life, and that guaranteed a future, had succeeded in triumphing over the opposite values, the values of degeneration, in the very seat of Christianity itself,—and *even in the hearts of those sitting there,*—Luther, that cursed monk, not only restored the Church, but, what was a thousand times worse, restored Christianity, and at a time too when it lay defeated. Christianity, the *Denial of the Will to Live,* exalted to a religion! Luther was an impossible monk who, thanks to his own "impossibility," attacked the Church, and in so doing restored it! Catholics would be perfectly justified in celebrating feasts in honour of Luther, and in producing festival plays[25] in his honour. Luther and the "rebirth of morality"! May all psychology go to the devil! Without a shadow of a doubt the Germans are idealists. On two occasions when, at the cost of enormous courage and self-control, an upright, unequivocal, and perfectly scientific attitude of mind had been attained, the Germans were able to discover back stairs leading down to the old "ideal" again, compromises between truth and the "ideal," and, in short, formulæ for the right to reject science and to perpetrate falsehoods. Leibniz and Kant—these two great breaks upon the intellectual honesty of Europe! Finally, at a moment when there appeared on the bridge that spanned two centuries of decadence, a superior force of genius and will which was strong enough to consolidate Europe and to convert it into a political and economic unit, with the object of ruling the world, the Germans, with their Wars of Independence, robbed Europe of the significance—the marvellous significance, of Napoleon's life. And in so doing they laid on their conscience everything that followed, everything that exists to-day,—this sickliness and want of reason which is most opposed to culture, and which is called Nationalism,—this *névrose nationale* from which Europe is suffering acutely; this eternal subdivision of Europe into petty states, with politics on a municipal scale: they have robbed Europe itself of its significance, of its reason,—and have stuffed it into a cul-de-sac. Is there any one except me who knows the way out of this cul-de-sac? Does anyone except me know of an aspiration which would be great enough to bind the people of Europe once more together?

3

And after all, why should I not express my suspicions? In my case, too, the Germans will attempt to make a great fate give birth merely to a mouse. Up to the present they have compromised themselves with me; I doubt whether the future will improve them. Alas! how happy I should be to prove a false prophet in this matter! My natural readers and listeners are already Russians, Scandinavians, and Frenchmen—will they always be the same? In the

[25] Ever since the year 1617 such plays have been produced by the Protestants of Germany.—TR.

history of knowledge, Germans are represented only by doubtful names, they have been able to produce only "*unconscious*" swindlers (this word applies to Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, just as well as to Kant or Leibniz; they were all mere *Schleiermachers*).[26] The Germans must not have the honour of seeing the first upright intellect in their history of intellects, that intellect in which truth ultimately got the better of the fraud of four thousand years, reckoned as one with the German intellect. "German intellect" is my foul air: I breathe with difficulty in the neighbourhood of this psychological uncleanliness that has now become instinctive—an uncleanliness which in every word and expression betrays a German. They have never undergone a seventeenth century of hard self-examination, as the French have,—a La Rochefoucauld, a Descartes, are a thousand times more upright than the very first among Germans,—the latter have not yet had any psychologists. But psychology is almost the standard of measurement for the cleanliness or uncleanliness of a race.... For if a man is not even clean, how can he be deep? The Germans are like women, you can scarcely ever I fathom their depths—they haven't any, and that's the end of it. Thus they cannot even be called shallow. That which is called "deep" in Germany, is precisely this instinctive uncleanliness towards one's self, of which I have just spoken: people refuse to be clear in regard to their own natures. Might I be allowed, perhaps, to suggest the word "German" as an international epithet denoting this psychological depravity?—At the moment of writing, for instance, the German Emperor is declaring it to be his Christian duty to liberate the slaves in Africa; among us Europeans, then, this would be called simply "German." ... Have the Germans ever produced even a book that had depth? They are lacking in the mere idea of what constitutes a book. I have known scholars who thought that Kant was deep. At the Court of Prussia I fear that Herr von Treitschke is regarded as deep. And when I happen to praise Stendhal as a deep psychologist, I have often been compelled, in the company of German University Professors, to spell his name aloud.

4

And why should I not proceed to the end? I am fond of clearing the air. It is even part of my ambition to be considered as essentially a despiser of Germans. I expressed my suspicions of the German character even at the age of six-and-twenty (see *Thoughts out of Season,* vol. ii. pp. 164, 165),—to my mind the Germans are impossible. When I try to think of the kind of man who is opposed to me in all my instincts, my mental image takes the form of a German. The first thing I ask myself when I begin analysing a man, is, whether he has a feeling for distance in him; whether he sees rank, gradation, and order everywhere between man and man; whether he makes distinctions; for this is what constitutes a gentleman. Otherwise he belongs hopelessly to that open-hearted, open-minded—alas! and always very good-natured species, *la canaille*! But the Germans are *canaille*—alas! they are so good-natured! A man lowers himself by frequenting the society of Germans: the German places every one on an equal footing. With the exception of my intercourse with one or two artists, and above all with Richard Wagner, I cannot say that I have spent one pleasant hour with Germans. Suppose, for one moment, that the profoundest spirit of all ages were to appear among Germans, then one of the saviours of the Capitol would be sure to arise and declare that his own ugly soul was just as great. I can no longer abide this race with which a man is always in bad company, which; has no idea of nuances—woe to me! I am a nuance—and which has not *esprit* in its feet, and cannot even walk withal! In short, the Germans have no feet at all, they simply have legs. The Germans have not the faintest idea of how vulgar they are—but this in itself is the acme of vulgarity,—they are not even ashamed of being merely Germans. They will have their say in everything, they regard themselves as fit to decide all questions; I

[26] *Schleiermacher* literally means a weaver or maker of veils.—TR.

even fear that they have decided about me. My whole life is essentially a proof of this remark. In vain have I sought among them for a sign of tact and delicacy towards myself. Among Jews I did indeed find it, but not among Germans. I am so constituted as to be gentle and kindly to every one,—I have the right not to draw distinctions,—but this does not prevent my eyes from being open. I except no one, and least of all my friends,—I only trust that this has not prejudiced my reputation for humanity among them? There are five or six things which I have always made points of honour. Albeit, the truth remains that for many years I have considered almost every letter that has reached me as a piece of cynicism. There is more cynicism in an attitude of goodwill towards me than in any sort of hatred. I tell every friend to his face that he has never thought it worth his while to *study* any one of my writings: from the slightest hints I gather that they do not even know what lies hidden in my books. And with regard even to my *Zarathustra,* which of my friends would have seen more in it than a piece of unwarrantable, though fortunately harmless, arrogance? Ten years have elapsed, and no one has yet felt it a duty to his conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence beneath which it has been entombed. It was a foreigner, a Dane, who first showed sufficient keenness of instinct and of courage to do this, and who protested indignantly against my so-called friends. At what German University to-day would such lectures on my philosophy be possible, as those which Dr. Brandes delivered last spring in Copenhagen, thus proving once more his right to the title psychologist? For my part, these things have never caused me any pain; that which is *necessary* does not offend me. *Amor fati* is the core of my nature. This, however, does not alter the fact that I love irony and even world-historic irony. And thus, about two years before hurling the destructive thunderbolt of the *Transvaluation,* which will send the whole of civilisation into convulsions, I sent my *Case of Wagner* out into the world. The Germans were given the chance of blundering and immortalising their stupidity once more on my account, and they still have just enough time to do it in. And have they fallen in with my plans? Admirably! my dear Germans. Allow me to congratulate you.

Why I Am A Fatality

1

I know my destiny. There will come a day when my name will recall the memory of something formidable—a crisis the like of which has never been known on earth, the memory of the most profound clash of consciences, and the passing of a sentence upon all that which theretofore had been believed, exacted, and hallowed. I am not a man, I am dynamite. And with it all there is nought of the founder of a religion in me. Religions are matters for the mob; after coming in contact with a religious man, I always feel that I must wash my hands.... I require no "believers," it is my opinion that I am too full of malice to believe even in myself; I never address myself to masses. I am horribly frightened that one day I shall be pronounced "holy." You will understand why I publish this book beforehand—it is to prevent people from wronging me. I refuse to be a saint; I would rather be a clown. Maybe I am a clown. And I am notwithstanding, or rather not *not*withstanding, the mouthpiece of truth; for nothing more blown-out with falsehood has ever existed, than a saint. But my truth is terrible: for hitherto *lies* have been called truth. *The Transvaluation of all Values,* this is my formula for mankind's greatest step towards coming to its senses—a step which in me became flesh and genius. My destiny ordained that I should be the first decent human being, and that I should feel myself opposed to the falsehood of millenniums. I was the first to discover truth, and for the simple reason that I was the first who became conscious of falsehood as falsehood—that is to say, I smelt it as such. My genius resides in my nostrils. I contradict as no one has contradicted hitherto, and am nevertheless the reverse of a negative spirit. I am the harbinger of joy, the like of which has never existed before; I have discovered tasks of such lofty greatness that, until my time, no one had any idea of such things. Mankind can begin to have fresh hopes, only now that I have lived. Thus, I am necessarily a man of Fate. For when Truth enters the lists against the falsehood of ages, shocks are bound to ensue, and a spell of earthquakes, followed by the transposition of hills and valleys, such as the world has never yet imagined even in its dreams. The concept "politics" then becomes elevated entirely to the sphere of spiritual warfare. All the mighty realms of the ancient order of society are blown into space—for they are all based on falsehood: there will be wars, the like of which have never been seen on earth before. Only from my time and after me will politics on a large scale exist on earth.

2

If you should require a formula for a destiny of this kind that has taken human form, you will find it in my *Zarathustra*.

"And he who would be a creator in good and evil—verily, he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces.

"Thus the greatest evil belongeth unto the greatest good: but this is the creative good."

I am by far the most terrible man that has ever existed; but this does not alter the fact that I shall become the most beneficent. I know the joy of *annihilation* to a degree which is commensurate with my power to annihilate. In both cases I obey my Dionysian nature, which knows not how to separate the negative deed from the saying of yea. I am the first immoralist, and in this sense I am essentially the annihilator.

3

People have never asked me as they should have done, what the name of Zarathustra precisely meant in my mouth, in the mouth of the first immoralist; for that which distinguishes this Persian from all others in the past is the very fact that he was the exact reverse of an immoralist. Zarathustra was the first to see in the struggle between good and evil the essential wheel in the working of things. The translation of morality into the realm of metaphysics, as force, cause, end-in-itself, is his work. But the very question suggests its own answer. Zarathustra created this most portentous of all errors,—morality; therefore he must be the first to expose it. Not only because he has had longer and greater experience of the subject than any other thinker,—all history is indeed the experimental refutation of the theory of the so-called moral order of things,—but because of the more important fact that Zarathustra was the most truthful of thinkers. In his teaching alone is truthfulness upheld as the highest virtue—that is to say, as the reverse of the cowardice of the "idealist" who takes to his heels at the sight of reality. Zarathustra has more pluck in his body than all other thinkers put together. To tell the truth and to aim straight: that is the first Persian virtue. Have I made myself clear? ... The overcoming of morality by itself, through truthfulness, the moralist's overcoming of himself in his opposite—in me—that is what the name Zarathustra means in my mouth.

4

In reality two negations are involved in my title Immoralist. I first of all deny the type of man that has hitherto been regarded as the highest—the *good,* the *kind,* and the *charitable*; and I also deny that kind of morality which has become recognised and paramount as morality-in-itself—I speak of the morality of decadence, or, to use a still cruder term, Christian morality. I would agree to the second of the two negations being regarded as the more decisive, for, reckoned as a whole, the overestimation of goodness and kindness seems to me already a consequence of decadence, a symptom of weakness, and incompatible with any ascending and yea-saying life. Negation and annihilation are inseparable from a yea-saying attitude towards life. Let me halt for a moment at the question of the psychology of the good man. In order to appraise the value of a certain type of man, the cost of his maintenance must be calculated,—and the conditions of his existence must be known. The condition of the existence of the *good* is falsehood: or, otherwise expressed, the refusal at any price to see how reality is actually constituted. The refusal to see that this reality is not so constituted as always to be stimulating beneficent instincts, and still less, so as to suffer at all moments the intrusion of ignorant and good-natured hands. To consider distress of all kinds as an objection, as something which must be done away with, is the greatest nonsense on earth; generally speaking, it is nonsense of the most disastrous sort, fatal in its stupidity—almost as mad as the will to abolish bad weather, out of pity for the poor, so to speak. In the great economy of the whole universe, the terrors of reality (in the passions, in the desires, in the will to power) are incalculably more necessary than that form of petty happiness which is called "goodness"; it is even needful to practise leniency in order so much as to allow the latter a place at all, seeing that it is based upon a falsification of the instincts. I shall have an excellent opportunity of showing the incalculably calamitous consequences to the whole of history, of the credo of optimism, this monstrous offspring of the *homines optimi.* Zarathustra,[27] the first who recognised that the optimist is just as degenerate as the pessimist, though perhaps more detrimental, says: "*Good men never speak the truth. False shores and false harbours were ye taught by the good. In the lies of the good were ye born and bred. Through the good everything hath become false and crooked from the roots.*" Fortunately the world is not built merely upon those instincts which would secure to the

[27] Needless to say this is Nietzsche, and no longer the Persian.—TR.

good-natured herd animal his paltry happiness. To desire everybody to become a "good man," "a gregarious animal," "a blue-eyed, benevolent, beautiful soul," or—as Herbert Spencer wished—a creature of altruism, would mean robbing existence of its greatest character, castrating man, and reducing humanity to a sort of wretched Chinadom. *And this some have tried to do! It is precisely this that men called morality.* In this sense Zarathustra calls "the good," now "the last men," and anon "the beginning of the end"; and above all, he considers them as *the most detrimental kind of men,* because they secure their existence at the cost of Truth and at the cost of the Future.

"The good—they cannot create; they are ever the beginning of the end.

"They crucify him who writeth new values on new tables; they sacrifice *unto themselves* the future; they crucify the whole future of humanity!

"The good—they are ever the beginning of the end.

"And whatever harm the slanderers of the world may do, *the harm of the good is the most calamitous of all harm.*"

5

Zarathustra, as the first psychologist of the good man, is perforce the friend of the evil man. When a degenerate kind of man has succeeded to the highest rank among the human species, his position must have been gained at the cost of the reverse type—at the cost of the strong man who is certain of life. When the gregarious animal stands in the glorious rays of the purest virtue, the exceptional man must be degraded to the rank of the evil. If falsehood insists at all costs on claiming the word "truth" for its own particular standpoint, the really truthful man must be sought out among the despised. Zarathustra allows of no doubt here; he says that it was precisely the knowledge of the good, of the "best," which inspired his absolute horror of men. And it was out of this feeling of repulsion that he grew the wings which allowed him to soar into remote futures. He does not conceal the fact that his type of man is one which is relatively superhuman—especially as opposed to the "good" man, and that the good and the just would regard his superman as the *devil.*

"Ye higher men, on whom my gaze now falls, this is the doubt that ye wake in my breast, and this is my secret laughter: methinks ye would call my Superman—the devil! So strange are ye in your souls to all that is great, that the Superman would be terrible in your eyes for his goodness."

It is from this passage, and from no other, that you must set out to understand the goal to which Zarathustra aspires—the kind of man that he conceives sees reality *as it is;* he is strong enough for this—he is not estranged or far removed from it, he is that reality himself, in his own nature can be found all the terrible and questionable character of reality: *only thus can man have greatness.*

6

But I have chosen the title of Immoralist as a surname and as a badge of honour in yet another sense; I am very proud to possess this name which distinguishes me from all the rest of mankind. No one hitherto has felt Christian morality beneath him; to that end there were needed height, a remoteness of vision, and an abysmal psychological depth, not believed to be possible hitherto. Up to the present Christian morality has been the Circe of all thinkers—they stood at her service. What man, before my time, had descended into the underground caverns from out of which the poisonous fumes of this ideal—of this slandering of the world—burst forth? What man had even dared to suppose that they were underground caverns? Was a single one of the philosophers who preceded me a psychologist at all, and not

the very reverse of a psychologist—that is to say, a “superior swindler,” an “Idealist”? Before my time there was no psychology. To be the first in this new realm may amount to a curse; at all events, it is a fatality: *for one is also the first to despise.* My danger is the loathing of mankind.

7

Have you understood me? That which defines me, that which makes me stand apart from the whole of the rest of humanity, is the fact that I *unmasked* Christian morality. For this reason I was in need of a word which conveyed the idea of a challenge to everybody. Not to have awakened to these discoveries before, struck me as being the sign of the greatest uncleanliness that mankind has on its conscience, as self-deception become instinctive, as the fundamental will to be blind to every phenomenon, all causality and all reality; in fact, as an almost criminal fraud *in psychologicis.* Blindness in regard to Christianity is the essence of criminality—for it is the crime *against* life. Ages and peoples, the first as well as the last, philosophers and old women, with the exception of five or six moments in history (and of myself, the seventh), are all alike in this. Hitherto the Christian has been *the* ”moral being,” a peerless oddity, and, *as* ”a moral being,” he was more absurd, more vain, more thoughtless, and a greater disadvantage to himself, than the greatest despiser of humanity could have deemed possible. Christian morality is the most malignant form of all false too the actual Circe of humanity: that which has corrupted mankind. It is not error as error which infuriates me at the sight of this spectacle; it is not the millenniums of absence of “goodwill,” of discipline, of decency, and of bravery in spiritual things, which betrays itself in the triumph of Christianity; it is rather the absence of nature, it is the perfectly ghastly fact that *anti-nature* itself received the highest honours as morality and as law, and remained suspended over man as the Categorical Imperative. Fancy blundering in this way, *not* as an individual, *not* as a people, but as a whole species! as *humanity*! To teach the contempt of all the principal instincts of life; to posit falsely the existence of a “soul,” of a “spirit,” in order to be able to defy the body; to spread the feeling that there is something impure in the very first prerequisite of life—in sex; to seek the principle of evil in the profound need of growth and expansion—that is to say, in severe self-love (the term itself is slanderous); and conversely to see a higher moral value—but what am I talking about?—I mean the *moral value per se,* in the typical signs of decline, in the antagonism of the instincts, in “selflessness,” in the loss of ballast, in “the suppression of the personal element,” and in “love of one’s neighbour” (neighbouritis!). What! is humanity itself in a state of degeneration? Has it always been in this state? One thing is certain, that ye are taught only the values of decadence as the highest values. The morality of self-renunciation is essentially the morality of degeneration; the fact, “I am going to the dogs,” is translated into the imperative,” Ye shall all go to the dogs”—and not only into the imperative. This morality of self-renunciation, which is the only kind of morality that has been taught hitherto, betrays the will to nonentity—it denies life to the very roots. There still remains the possibility that it is not mankind that is in a state of degeneration, but only that parasitical kind of man—the priest, who, by means of morality and lies, has climbed up to his position of determinator of values, who divined in Christian morality his road to power. And, to tell the truth, this is my opinion. The teachers and I leaders of mankind—including the theologians—have been, every one of them, decadents: hence their) transvaluation of all values into a hostility towards; life; hence morality. *The definition of morality;* Morality is the idiosyncrasy of decadents, actuated by a desire *to avenge themselves with success upon life.* I attach great value to this definition.

8

Have you understood me? I have not uttered a single word which I had not already said five years ago through my mouthpiece Zarathustra. The unmasking of Christian morality is an event which unequalled in history, it is a real catastrophe. The man who throws light upon it is a *force majeure,* a fatality; he breaks the history of man into two. Time is reckoned up before him and after him. The lightning flash of truth struck precisely that which theretofore had stood highest: he who understands what was destroyed by that flash should look to see whether he still holds anything in his hands. Everything which until then was called truth, has been revealed as the most detrimental, most spiteful, and most subterranean form of life; the holy pretext, which was the "improvement" of man, has been recognised as a ruse for draining life of its energy and of its blood. Morality conceived as *Vampirism*.... The man who unmasks morality has also unmasked the worthlessness of the values in which men either believe or have believed; he no longer sees anything to be revered in the most venerable man—even in the types of men that have been pronounced holy; all he can see in them is the most fatal kind of abortions, fatal, *because they fascinate.* The concept "God" was invented as the opposite of the concept life—everything detrimental, poisonous, and slanderous, and all deadly hostility to life, wad bound together in one horrible unit in Him. The concepts "beyond" and "true world" were invented in order to depreciate the only world that exists—in order that no goal or aim, no sense or task, might be left to earthly reality. The concepts "soul," "spirit," and last of all the concept "immortal soul," were invented in order to throw contempt on the body, in order to make it sick and "holy," in order to cultivate an attitude of appalling levity towards all things in life which deserve to be treated seriously, *i.e.* the questions of nutrition and habitation, of intellectual diet, the treatment of the sick, cleanliness, and weather. Instead of health, we find the "salvation of the soul"—that is to say, a *folie circulate* fluctuating between convulsions and penitence and the hysteria of redemption. The concept "sin," together with the torture instrument appertaining to it, which is the concept "free will," was invented in order to confuse and muddle our instincts, and to render the mistrust of them man's second nature! In the concepts "disinterestedness" and "self-denial," the actual signs of decadence are to be found. The allurement of that which is detrimental, the inability to discover one's own advantage and self-destruction, are made into absolute qualities, into the "duty," the "holiness," and the "divinity" of man. Finally—to keep the worst to the last—by the notion of the *good* man, all that is favoured which is weak, ill, botched, and sick-in-itself, which *ought to be wiped out.* The law of selection is thwarted, an ideal is made out of opposition to the proud, well-constituted man, to him who says yea to life, to him who is certain of the future, and who guarantees the future—this man is henceforth called the *evil* one. And all this was believed in as *morality!—Ecrasez l'infâme!*

9

Have you understood me? *Dionysus* versus *Christ.*

Editorial Note To Poetry

The editor begs to state that, contrary to his announcement in the Editorial Note to *The Joyful Wisdom,* in which he declared his intention of publishing all of Nietzsche's poetry, he has nevertheless withheld certain less important verses from publication. This alteration in his plans is due to his belief that it is an injustice and an indiscretion on the part of posterity to surprise an author, as it were, in his *négligé,* or, in plain English, "in his shirt-sleeves." Authors generally are very sensitive on this point, and rightly so: a visit behind the scenes is not precisely to the advantage of the theatre, and even finished pictures not yet framed are not readily shown by the careful artist. As the German edition, however, contains nearly all that Nietzsche left behind, either in small notebooks or on scraps of paper, the editor could not well suppress everything that was not prepared for publication by Nietzsche himself, more particularly as some of the verses are really very remarkable. He has, therefore, made a very plentiful selection from the *Songs and Epigrams,* nearly all of which are to be found translated here, and from the Fragments of the Dionysus Dithyrambs, of which over half have been given. All the complete Dionysus Dithyrambs appear in this volume, save those which are duplicates of verses already translated in the Fourth Part of *Zarathustra.* These Dionysus Dithyrambs were prepared ready for press by Nietzsche himself. He wrote the final manuscript during the summer of 1888 in Sils Maria; their actual composition, however, belongs to an earlier date.

All the verses, unless otherwise stated, have been translated by Mr. Paul Victor Cohn.

Songs, Epigrams, Etc.

SONGS

TO MELANCHOLY[28]

O Melancholy, be not wroth with me
That I this pen should point to praise thee only,
And in thy praise, with head bowed to the knee,
Squat like a hermit on a tree-stump lonely.
Thus oft thou saw'st me,—yesterday, at least,—
Full in the morning sun and its hot beaming,
While, visioning the carrion of his feast,
The hungry vulture valleyward flew screaming.

Yet didst thou err, foul bird, albeit I,
So like a mummy 'gainst my log lay leaning!
Thou couldst not see these eyes whose ecstasy
Rolled hither, thither, proud and overweening.
What though they did not soar unto thine height,
or reached those far-off, cloud-reared precipices,
For *that* they sank the deeper so they might
Within themselves light Destiny's abysses.

Thus oft in sullenness perverse and free,
Bent hideous like a savage at his altar,
There, Melancholy, held I thought of thee,
A penitent, though youthful, with his psalter.

So crouched did I enjoy the vulture's span,
The thunder of the avalanche's paces,
Thou spakest to me—nor wast false like man,
Thou spakest, but with stern and dreadful faces.

Harsh goddess thou of Nature wild and stark,
Mistress, that com'st with threats to daunt and quell me,
To point me out the vulture's airy are
And laughing avalanches, to repel me.
Around us gnashing pants the lust to kill,
The torment to win life in all its changes;
Alluring on some cliff, abrupt and chill,
Some flower craves the butterfly that ranges.

All this am I—shuddering I feel it all—
O butterfly beguiled, O lonely flower,
The vulture and the ice-pent waterfall,
The moaning storm—all symbols of thy power,—
Thou goddess grim before whom deeply bowed,
With head on knee, my lips with pæans bursting,

[28] Translated by Herman Scheffauer.

I lift a dreadful song and cry aloud
For Life, for Life, for Life—forever thirsting!

O vengeful goddess, be not wroth, I ask,
That I to mesh thee in my rhymes have striven.
He trembles who beholds thine awful mask;
He quails to whom thy dread right hand is given.
Song upon trembling song by starts and fits
I chant, in rhythm all my thought unfolding,
The black ink flows, the pointed goose-quill spits,
O goddess, goddess—leave me to my scolding!

****

AFTER A NIGHT STORM[29]

To-day in misty veils thou hangest dimly,
Gloomy goddess, o'er my window-pane.
Grimly whirl the pallid snow-flakes, grimly
Roars the swollen brook unto the plain.

Ah, by light of haggard levins glaring,
'Neath the untamed thunder's roar and roll,
'Midst the valley's murk wast thou preparing—
Sorceress! thy dank and poisoned bowl.

Shuddering, I heard through midnight breaking
Raptures of thy voice—and howls of pain.
Saw thy bright orbs gleam, thy right hand shaking
With the mace of thunder hurled amain.

Near my dreary couch I heard the crashes
Of thine armoured steps, heard weapons slam,
Heard thy brazen chain strike 'gainst the sashes,
And thy voice: "Come! hearken who I am!

The immortal Amazon they call me;
All things weak and womanish I shun;
Manly scorn and hate in war enthral me;
Victress I and tigress all in one!

Where I tread there corpses fall before me;
From mine eyes the furious torches fly,
And my brain thinks poisons. Bend, adore me!
Worm of Earth and Will o' Wisp—or die!"

****

HYMNS TO FRIENDSHIP

(*Two Fragments*)

1

Goddess Friendship, deign to hear the song
That we sing in friendship's honour!

[29] Translated by Herman Scheffauer.

Where the eye of friendship glances,
Filled with all the joy of friendship
Come thou nigh to aid me,
Rosy dawn in thy gaze and
In holy hand the faithful pledge of youth eternal.

2

Morning's past: the sun of noonday
Scorches with hot ray our heads.
Let us sit beneath the arbour
Singing songs in praise of friendship.
Friendship was our life's red dawning,
And its sunset red shall be.

****

THE WANDERER[30]

All through the night a wanderer walks
Sturdy of stride,
With winding vale and sloping height
E'er at his side.
Fair is the night:
On, on he strides, nor slackens speed,
And knows not where his path will lead.

A bird's song in the night is heard,
"Ah me, what hast thou done, O bird,
How dost thou grip my sense and feet
And pourest heart-vexation sweet
Into mine ear—I must remain,
To hearken fain:
Why lure me with inviting strain?"

The good bird speaks, staying his song:
"I lure not thee,—no, thou art wrong—
With these my trills
I lure my mate from off the hills—
Nor heed thy plight.
To me alone the night's not fair.
What's that to thee? Forth must thou fare,
On, onward ever, resting ne'er.

Why stand'st thou now?
What has my piping done to thee,
Thou roaming wight?"
The good bird pondered, silent quite,
"Why doth my piping change his plight?
Why stands he now,
That luckless, luckless, roaming wight?"

****

[30] This poem was written on the betrothal of one of Nietzsche's Bâle friends.—TR.

TO THE GLACIER

At noontide hour, when first,
Into the mountains Summer treads,
Summer, the boy with eyes so hot and weary,
Then too he speaks,
Yet we can only see his speech.

His breath is panting, like the sick man's breath
On fevered couch.
The glacier and the fir tree and the spring
Answer his call
—Yet we their answer only see.
For faster from the rock leaps down
The torrent stream, as though to greet,
And stands, like a white column trembling,
All yearning there.
And darker yet and truer looks the fir-tree
Than e'er before.
And 'twixt the ice-mass and the cold grey stone
A sudden light breaks forth—
Such light I once beheld, and marked the sign.

Even the dead man's eye
Surely once more grows light,
When, sorrowful, his child
Gives him embrace and kiss:
Surely once more the flame of light
Wells out, and glowing into life
The dead eye speaks: "My child!
Ah child, you know I love you true!"

So all things glow and speak—the glacier speaks,
The brook, the fir,
Speak with their glance the selfsame words:
We love you true,
Ah, child, you know we love you, love you true!

And he,
Summer, the boy with eyes so hot and weary,
Woe-worn, gives kisses
More ardent ever,
And will not go:
But like to veils he blows his words
From out his lips,
His cruel words:
"My greeting's parting,
My coming going,
In youth I die."

All round they hearken
And scarcely breathe
(No songster sings),

And shuddering run
Like gleaming ray
Over the mountain;
All round they ponder,—
Nor speak—

Twas at the noon,
At noontide hour, when first
Into the mountains Summer treads,
Summer, the boy with eyes so hot and weary.

****

AUTUMN[31]

‘Tis Autumn:—Autumn yet shall break thy heart!
Fly away! fly away!—
The sun creeps ‘gainst the hill
And climbs and climbs
And rests at every step.

How faded grew the world!
On weary, slackened strings the wind
Playeth his tune.
Fair Hope fled far—
He waileth after.

‘Tis Autumn:—Autumn yet shall break thy heart!
Fly away! fly away!
O fruit of the tree,
Thou tremblest, fallest?
What secret whispered unto thee
The Night,
That icy shudders deck thy cheek,
Thy cheek of purple hue?

Silent art thou, nor dost reply—
Who speaketh still?—

‘Tis Autumn:—Autumn yet shall break thy heart!
Fly away! fly away!—
“I am not fair,”—
So speaks the lone star-flower,—
“Yet men I love
And comfort men—
Many flowers shall they behold,
And stoop to me,
And break me, ah!—
So that within their eyes shall gleam
Remembrance swift,
Remembrance of far fairer things than I:—
I see it—see it—and I perish so.”

[31] Translated by Herman Scheffauer.

‘Tis Autumn:—Autumn yet shall break thy heart!
Fly away! fly away!

****

CAMPO SANTO DI STAGLIENO[32]

Maiden, in gentle wise
You stroke your lamb’s soft fleece,
Yet flashing from your eyes
Both light and flame ne’er cease.
Creature of merry jest
And favourite near and far,
Pious with kindness blest,
Amorosissima!

What broke so soon the chain,
What does your heart deplore?
And who, pray, would not fain,
If you loved him, adore?—
You’re mute, but from your eye,
The tear-drop is not far,
You’re mute: you’ll yearn and die,
Amorosissima?

****

THE LITTLE BRIG NAMED “LITTLE ANGEL”[33]

“Little Angel” call they me!—
Now a ship, but once a girl,
Ah, and still too much a girl!
My steering-wheel, so bright to see,
But for sake of love doth whirl.

“Little Angel” call they me,
With hundred flags to ornament,
A captain smart, on glory bent,
Steers me, puffed with vanity
(He himself’s an ornament).

“Little Angel” call they me,
And where’er a little flame
Gleams for me, I, like a lamb,
Go my journey eagerly
(I was always such a lamb!).

“Little Angel” call they me—
Think you I can bark and whine
Like a dog, this mouth of mine

[32] Campo Santo di Staglieno is the cemetery of Staglieno, near Genoa. The poem was inspired by the sight of a girl with a lamb on the tombstone, with the words underneath— "Pia, caritatevole, amorosissima."
[33] Published by Nietzsche himself. The poem was inspired by a ship that was christened *Angiolina,* in memory of a love-sick girl who leapt into the sea.—TR.

Throwing smoke and flame full free?
Ah, a devil’s mouth is mine.

“Little Angel” call they me—
Once I spoke a bitter word,
That my lover, when he heard,
Fast and far away did flee:
Yes, I killed him with that word!

“Little Angel” call they me:
Hardly heard, I sprang so glib
From the cliff and broke a rib:
From my frame my soul went free,
Yes, escaped me through that rib.

“Little Angel” call they me—
Then my soul, like cat in flight
Straight did on this ship alight
Swiftly bounding—one, two, three!
Yes, its claws are swift to smite.

“Little Angel” call they me!—
Now a ship, but once a girl,
Ah, and still too much a girl!
My steering-wheel, so bright to see,
For sake of love alone doth whirl.

****

MAIDEN’S SONG

Yesterday with seventeen years
Wisdom reached I, a maiden fair,
I am grey-haired, it appears,
Now in all things—save my hair.

Yesterday, I had a thought,
Was’t a thought?—you laugh and scorn!
Did you ever have a thought?
Rather was a feeling born.

Dare a woman think? This screed
Wisdom long ago begot:
“Follow woman must, not lead;
If she thinks, she follows not.”

Wisdom speaks—I credit naught:
Rather hops and stings like flea:
“Woman seldom harbours thought;
If she thinks, no good is she!”

To this wisdom, old, renowned,
Bow I in deep reverence:
Now my wisdom I’ll expound
In its very quintessence.

A voice spoke in me yesterday
As ever—listen if you can:
“Woman is more beauteous aye,
But more interesting—man!”

****

“PIA, CARITATEVOLE, AMOROSISSIMA”[34]

Cave where the dead ones rest,
O marble falsehood, thee
I love: for easy jest
My soul thou settest free.

To-day, to-day alone,
My soul to tears is stirred,
At thee, the pictured stone,
At thee, the graven word.

This picture (none need wis)
I kissed the other day.
When there’s so much to kiss
Why did I kiss the—clay?

Who knows the reason why?
“A tombstone fool!” you laugh:
I kissed—I’ll not deny—
E’en the long epitaph.

****

TO FRIENDSHIP

Hail to thee, Friendship!
My hope consummate,
My first red daybreak!
Alas, so endless
Oft path and night seemed,
And life’s long road
Aimless and hateful!
Now life I’d double
In thine eyes seeing
Dawn-glory, triumph,
Most gracious goddess!

****

PINE TREE AND LIGHTNING

O’er man and beast I grew so high,
And speak—but none will give reply.

Too lone and tall my crest did soar:
I wait: what am I waiting for?

[34] See above, p. 157. Both poems were inspired by the same tombstone.—TR.

The clouds are grown too nigh of late,
'Tis the first lightning I await.

****

TREE IN AUTUMN

Why did ye, blockheads, me awaken
While I in blissful blindness stood?
Ne'er I by fear more fell was shaken—
Vanished my golden dreaming mood.

Bear-elephants, with trunks all greedy,
Knock first! Where have your manners fled?
I threw—and fear has made me speedy—
Dishes of ripe fruit—at your head.

****

AMONG FOES (OR AGAINST CRITICS)

(*After a Gipsy Proverb*)

Here the gallows, there the cord,
And the hangman's ruddy beard.
Round, the venom-glancing horde:—
Nothing new to me's appeared.
Many times I've seen the sight,
Now laughing in your face I cry,
"Hanging me is useless quite:
Die? Nay, nay, I cannot die!"

Beggars all! Ye envy me
Winning what ye never won!
True, I suffer agony,
But for you—your life is done.
Many times I've faced death's plight,
Yet steam and light and breath am I.
Hanging me is useless quite:
Die? Nay, nay, I cannot die!

****

THE NEW COLUMBUS[35]

"Dearest," said Columbus, "never
Trust a Genoese again.
At the blue he gazes ever,
Distance doth his soul enchain.

Strangeness is to me too dear—
Genoa has sunk and passed—
Heart, be cool! Hand, firmly steer!
Sea before me: land—at last?

[35] The Genoese is Nietzsche himself, who lived a great part of his life at Genoa.—TR.

Firmly let us plant our feet,
Ne’er can we give up this game—
From the distance what doth greet?
One death, one happiness, one fame.

****

IN LONESOMENESS[36]

The cawing crows
Townwards on whirring pinions roam;
Soon come the snows—
Thrice happy now who hath a home!

Fast-rooted there,
Thou gazest backwards—oh, how long!
Thou fool, why dare
Ere winter come, this world of wrong?

This world—a gate
To myriad deserts dumb and hoar!
Who lost through fate
What thou hast lost, shall rest no more.

Now stand’st thou pale,
A frozen pilgrimage thy doom,
Like smoke whose trail
Cold and still colder skies consume.

Fly, bird, and screech,
Like desert-fowl, thy song apart!
Hide out of reach,
Fool! in grim ice thy bleeding heart.

Firmly let us plant our feet,
Ne’er can we give up this game—
From the distance what doth greet?
One death, one happiness, one fame.

The cawing crows
Townwards on whirring pinions roam:
Soon come the snows—
Woe unto him who hath no home!

My Answer

The man presumes—
Good Lord!—to think that I’d return
To those warm rooms
Where snug the German ovens burn

My friend, you see
‘Tis but thy folly drives me far,—
Pity for *thee*
And all that German blockheads are!

[36] Translated by Herman Scheffauer.

****

VENICE

ON the bridge I stood,
Mellow was the night,
Music came from far—
Drops of gold outpoured
On the shimmering waves.
Song, gondolas, light,
Floated a-twinkling out into the dusk.

The chords of my soul, moved
By unseen impulse, throbbed
Secretly into a gondola song,
With thrills of bright-hued ecstasy.
Had I a listener there?

****

EPIGRAMS

****

CAUTION: POISON![37]

He who cannot laugh at this had better not start reading;

For if he read and do not laugh, physic he'll be needing!

****

HOW TO FIND ONE'S COMPANY

With jesters it is good to jest:
Who likes to tickle, is tickled best.

****

THE WORD

I dearly love the living word,
That flies to you like a merry bird,
Ready with pleasant nod to greet,
E'en in misfortune welcome, sweet,
Yet it has blood, can pant you deep:
Then to the dove's ear it will creep:
And curl itself, or start for flight—
Whate'er it does, it brings delight.

Yet tender doth the word remain,
Soon it is ill, soon well again:
So if its little life you'd spare,
O grasp it lightly and with care,
Nor heavy hand upon it lay,
For e'en a cruel glance would slay!
There it would lie, unsouled, poor thing!

[37] Translated by Francis Bickley.

All stark, all formless, and all cold,
Its little body changed and battered,
By death and dying rudely shattered.

A dead word is a hateful thing,
A barren, rattling, ting-ting-ting.
A curse on ugly trades I cry
That doom all little words to die!

****

THE WANDERER AND HIS SHADOW

A Book

You'll ne'er go on nor yet go back?
Is e'en for chamois here no track?

So here I wait and firmly clasp
What eye and hand will let me grasp!

Five-foot-broad ledge, red morning's breath,
And under me—world, man, and death!

****

JOYFUL WISDOM

This is no book—for such, who looks?
Coffins and shrouds, naught else, are books!
What's dead and gone they make their prey,
Yet in my book lives fresh To-day.

This is no book—for such, who looks?
Who cares for coffins, shrouds, and spooks?
This is a promise, an act of will,
A last bridge-breaking, for good or ill;
A wind from sea, an anchor light,
A whirr of wheels, a steering right.
The cannon roars, white smokes its flame,
The sea—the monster—laughs and scents its game.

****

DEDICATION[38]

He who has much to tell, keeps much
Silent and unavowed.
He who with lightning-flash would touch
Must long remain a cloud!

****

THE NEW TESTAMENT[39]

Is this your Book of Sacred Lore,
For blessing, cursing, and such uses?—

[38] On the title-page of a copy of *Joyful Wisdom,* dedicated to Herr August Bungal.—TR.
[39] Translated by Francis Bickley.

Come, come now: at the very door
God some one else's wife seduces?

****

THE "TRUE GERMAN"

"O Peuple des meillures Tartuffes,
To you I'm true, I wis."
He spoke, but in the swiftest skiff
Went to Cosmopolis.

****

TO THE DARWINIANS[40]

A fool this honest Britisher
Was not ... But a Philosopher!
As *that* you really rate him?
Set Darwin up by Goethe's side?
But majesty you thus deride—
Genii majestatem!

****

To HAFIZ

(*Toast Question of a Water-Drinker*)

What you have builded, yonder inn,
O'ertops all houses high:
The posset you have brewed therein
The world will ne'er drink dry.
The bird that once appeared on earth
As phœnix, is your, guest.
The mouse that gave a mountain birth
Is you yourself confessed!
You're all and naught, you're inn and wine,
You're phœnix, mountain, mouse.
Back to yourself to come you pine
Or fly from out your house.
Downward from every height you've sunk,
And in the depths still shine:
The drunkenness of all the drunk,
Why do you ask for—wine?

****

TO SPINOZA

Of "All in One" a fervent devotee
Amore Dei, of reasoned piety,
Doff shoes! A land thrice holy this must be!—
Yet underneath this love there sate
A torch of vengeance, burning secretly

[40] Translated by Francis Bickley.

The Hebrew God was gnawed by Hebrew hate.
Hermit! Do I aright interpret thee?

****

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

That which he taught, has had its day,
That which he lived, shall live for aye:
Look at the man! No bondsman he!
Nor e'er to mortal bowed his knee!

****

TO RICHARD WAGNER

O You who chafe at every fetter's link,
A restless spirit, never free:
Who, though victorious aye, in bonds still cowered,
Disgusted more and more, and flayed and scoured,
Till from each cup of balm you poison drink,
Alas! and by the Cross all helpless sink,
You too, you too, among the overpowered!

For long I watched this play so weirdly shaped,
Breathing an air of prison, vault, and dread,
With churchly fragrance, clouds of incense spread,
And yet I found all strange/in terror gaped.
But now I throw my fool's cap o'er my head,
For I escaped!

****

MUSIC OF THE SOUTH[41]

All that my eagle e'er saw clear,
I see and feel in heart to-day
(Although my hope was wan and gray)
Thy song like arrow pierced mine ear,
A balm to touch, a balm to hear,
As down from heaven it winged its way.

So now for lands of southern fire
To happy isles where Grecian nymphs hold sport!
Thither now turn the ship's desire—
No ship e'er sped to fairer port.

****

A RIDDLE

A riddle here—can you the answer scent?
"When man discovers, woman must invent."——

****

[41] Probably written for Peter Gast, Nietzsche's faithful friend, and a musician whose "Southern" music Nietzsche admired.—TR.

TO FALSE FRIENDS

You stole, your eye's not clear to-day.
You only stole a thought, sir? nay,
Why be so rudely modest, pray?
Here, take another handful—stay,
Take all I have, you swine—you may
Eat till your filth is purged away.

****

FRIEND YORICK

Be of good cheer,
Friend Yorick! If this thought gives pain,
As now it does, I fear,
Is it not "God"? And though in error lain,
'Tis but your own dear child,
Your flesh and blood,
That tortures you and gives you pain,
Your little rogue and do-no-good,
See if the rod will change its mood!

In brief, friend Yorick, leave that drear
Philosophy—and let me now
Whisper one word as medicine,
My own prescription, in your ear,
My remedy against such spleen—
"Who loves his God, chastises him, I ween,"

****

RESOLUTION

I should be wise to suit my mood,
Not at the beck of other men:
God made as stupid as he could
The world—well, let me praise him then.

And if I make not straight my track,
But, far as may be, wind and bend,
That's how the sage begins his tack,
And that is how the fool will—end.

*   *   *   *   *

The world stands never still,
Night loves the glowing day—
Sweet sounds to ear "I will!"
And sweeter still "I may!"

****

THE HALCYONIAN[6]

Addressing me most bashfully,
A woman to-day said this:

"What would you be like in ecstasy,
If sober you feel such bliss?"

****

FINALE[42]

Laughter is a serious art.
I would do it better daily.
Did I well to-day or no?
Came the spark right from the heart?
Little use though head wag gaily,
If the heart contain no glow.

[42] Translated by Francis Bickley.

Dionysus-Dithyrambs

(1888)

These are the songs of Zarathustra which he sang to himself so as to endure his last solitude.

****

OF THE POVERTY OF THE RICHEST

Ten years passed by—
Not a drop reached me,
No rain-fraught wind, no dew of love
—A rainless land....
Now entreat I my wisdom
Not to become stingy in this drought;
Overflow thyself, trickle thy dew,
Be thyself the rain of the parched wilderness!

I once bade the clouds
Depart from my mountains;
Once I said to them,
"More light, ye dark ones!"
To-day I entice them to come:
Make me dark with your udders:
—I would milk you,
Ye cows of the heights!
Milk-warm wisdom, sweet dew of love
I pour over the land.

Away, away, ye truths
That look so gloomy!
I will not have on my mountains
Bitter, impatient truths.
May truth approach me to-day
Gilded by smiles,
Sweetened by the sun, browned by love,—
A ripe truth I would fain break off from the tree.

To-day I stretch my hands
Toward the tresses of chance,
Wise enough to lead,
To outwit chance like a child.
To-day I will be hospitable
'Gainst the unwelcome,
'Gainst destiny itself I will not be prickly....
—Zarathustra is no hedgehog.

My soul,
Insatiable with its tongue,
Has already tasted of all things good and evil,
And has dived into all depths.

But ever, like the cork,
It swims to the surface again,
And floats like oil upon brown seas:
Because of this soul men call me fortunate.

Who are my father and mother?
Is not my father Prince Plenty?
And my mother Silent Laughter?
Did not the union of these two
Beget me, the enigmatic beast—
Me, the monster of light—
Me, Zarathustra, the squanderer of all wisdom?

Sick to-day from tenderness,
A dewy wind,
Zarathustra sits waiting, waiting on his mountains—
Sweet and stewing
In his own juice,
Beneath his own summit,
Beneath his ice,
Weary and happy,
A Creator on his seventh day.

—Silence!
A truth passes over me
Like a cloud,—
With invisible lightnings it strikes me,
On broad, slow stairs,
Its happiness climbs to me:
Come, come, beloved truth!

—Silence!
'Tis *my* truth!
From timid eyes,
From velvet shudders,
Her glance meets mine,
Sweet and wicked, a maiden's glance.
She has guessed the reason of my happiness,
She has guessed me—ha! what is she thinking?
A purple dragon
Lurks in the abyss of her maiden's glance.

—Silence! My truth is speaking!—

"Woe to thee, Zarathustra!
Thou lookest like one
That hath swallowed gold:
They will slit up thy belly yet!

Thou art too rich,
Thou corrupter of many!
Thou makest too many jealous,
Too many poor....
Even on me thy light casts a shadow—

I feel chill: go away, thou rich one
Go away, Zarathustra, from the path of thy sun

****

BETWEEN BIRDS OF PREY

Who would here descend,
How soon
Is he swallowed up by the depths!
But thou, Zarathustra,
Still lovest the abysses,
Lovest them as doth the fir tree!

The fir flings its roots
Where the rock itself gazes
Shuddering at the depths,—
The fir pauses before the abysses
Where all around
Would fain descend:
Amid the impatience
Of wild, rolling, leaping torrents
It waits so patient, stern and silent,
Lonely....

Lonely!
Who would venture
Here to be guest—
To be thy guest?

A bird of prey, perchance
Joyous at others' misfortune,
Will cling persistent
To the hair of the steadfast watcher,
With frenzied laughter,
A vulture's laughter....

Wherefore so steadfast?
—Mocks he so cruel:
He must have wings, who loves the abyss,
He must not stay on the cliff,
As thou who hangest there!—

O Zarathustra,
Cruellest Nimrod!
Of late still a hunter of God,
A spider's web to capture virtue,
An arrow of evil!
Now
Hunted by thyself,
Thine own prey
Caught in the grip of thine own soul.

Now
Lonely to me and thee,

Twofold in thine own knowledge,
Mid a hundred mirrors
False to thyself,
Mid a hundred memories
Uncertain,
Weary at every wound,
Shivering at every frost,
Throttled in thine own noose,
Self-knower!
Self-hangman!

Why didst bind thyself
With the noose of thy wisdom?
Why luredst thyself
Into the old serpent's paradise?
Why stolest into
Thyself, thyself?...

A sick man now,
Sick of serpent's poison,
A captive now
Who hast drawn the hardest lot:
In thine own shaft
Bowed as thou workest,
In thine own cavern
Digging at thyself,
Helpless quite,
Stiff,
A cold corse
Overwhelmed with a hundred burdens,
Overburdened by thyself,
A knower!
A self-knower!
The wise Zarathustra!...

Thou soughtest the heaviest burden,
So foundest thou thyself,
And canst not shake thyself off....

Watching,
Chewing,
One that stands upright no more!
Thou wilt grow deformed even in thy grave,
Deformed spirit!

And of late still so proud
On all the stilts of thy pride!
Of late still the godless hermit,
The hermit with one comrade—the devil,
The scarlet prince of every devilment!...

Now—
Between two nothings

Huddled up,
A question-mark,
A weary riddle,
A riddle for vultures....
They will “solve” thee,
They hunger already for thy “solution,”
They flutter already about their “riddle,”
About thee, the doomed one!
O Zarathustra,
Self-knower!
Self-hangman!

****

THE SUN SINKS

I

Not much longer thirstest thou,
O burnt-up heart!
Promise is in the air,
From unknown mouths I feel a breath,
—The great coolness comes....
My sun stood hot above me at noonday:
A greeting to you that are coming,
Ye sudden winds,
Ye cool spirits of afternoon!

The air is strange and pure.
See how the night
Leers at me with eyes askance,
Like a seducer!...
Be strong, my brave heart,
And ask not “Why?”

2

The day of my life!
The sun sinks,
And the calm flood
Already is gilded.
Warm breathes the rock:
Did happiness at noonday
Take its siesta well upon it?
In green light
Happiness still glimmers up from the brown abyss

Day of my life!
Eventide’s nigh,
Thy eye already
Glows half-broken,
Thy dew already
Pours out its tear-drops,
Already over the white seas

Walks the purple of thy love,
Thy last hesitating holiness....

3

Golden gaiety, come!
Thou, the sweetest foretaste—
Foretaste of death!
—Went I my way too swiftly?
Now that the foot grows weary,
Thine eye still catches me,
Thy happiness still catches me.

Around but waves and play.
Whatever was hard
—Sank into blue oblivion.
My boat now stands idle.
Storm and motion—how did it forget them!
Desire and Hope are drowned,
Sea and soul are becalmed.

Seventh Solitude!
Never felt!
Sweet certainty nearer,
Or warmer the sun's ray.
—Glows not the ice of my summit yet?
Silvery, light, a fish
Now my vessel swims out....

****

THE LAST DESIRE[43]

So would I die
As then I saw him die,
The friend, who like a god
Into my darkling youth
Threw lightning's light and fire:
Buoyant yet deep was he,
Yea, in the battle's strife
With the gay dancer's heart.

Amid the warriors
His was the lightest heart,
Amid the conquerors
His brow was dark with thought—
He was a fate poised on his destiny:
Unbending, casting thought into the past
And future, such was he.

Fearful beneath the weight of victory,
Yet chanting, as both victory and death
Came hand and hand to him.

[43] Translated by Dr. G. T. Wrench.

Commanding even as he lay in death,
And his command that man annihilate.

So would I die
As then I saw him die,
Victorious and destroying.

****

THE BEACON

Here, where the island grew amid the seas,
A sacrificial rock high-towering,
Here under darkling heavens,
Zarathustra lights his mountain-fires,
A beacon for ships that have strayed,
A beacon for them that have an answer!...

These flames with grey-white belly,
In cold distances sparkle their desire,
Stretches its neck towards ever purer heights—
A snake upreared in impatience:
This signal I set up there before me.
This flame is mine own soul,
Insatiable for new distances,
Speeding upward, upward its silent heat.

Why flew Zarathustra from beasts and men?
Why fled he swift from all continents?
Six solitudes he knows already—
But even the sea was not lonely enough for him,
On the island he could climb, on the mount he
became flame,
At the seventh solitude
He casts a fishing-rod far o'er his head.

Storm-tossed seamen! Wreckage of ancient stars
Ye seas of the future! Uncompassed heavens!
At all lonely ones I now throw my fishing-rod.
Give answer to the flame's impatience,
Let me, the fisher on high mountains,
Catch my seventh, last solitude!——

****

FAME AND ETERNITY[44]

I

Speak, tell me, how long wilt thou brood
Upon this adverse fate of thine?
Beware, lest from thy doleful mood
A countenance *90* dark is brewed
That men in seeing thee divine

[44] Translated by Dr. G. T. Wrench.

A hate more bitter than the brine.
* * * *
Speak, why does Zarathustra roam
Upon the towering mountain-height?
Distrustful, cankered, dour, his home
Is shut so long from human sight?
* * * *
See, suddenly flames forth a lightning-flash,
The pit profound with thunderous challenge fights
Against the heavens, midst clamorous crack and crash
Of the great mountain! Cradled in the heights,
Born as the fruit of hate and lightning's love,
The wrath of Zarathustra dwells above
And looms with menace of a thundercloud.
* * * *
Ye, who have roofs, go quickly, creep and hide!
To bed, ye tenderlings! For thunders loud
Upon the blasts of storm triumphant ride,
And bastions and ramparts sway and rock,

The lightning sears the dusky face of night,
And eerie truths like gleams of Hades mock
The sense familiar. So in storm breaks forth
The flaming curse of Zarathustra's wrath.

2

This fame, which all the wide world loves,
I touch with gloves,
And scorning beat
Beneath my feet.
* * * *
Who hanker after the pay of it?
Who cast themselves in the way of it?
These prostitutes to gold,
These merchant folk. They fold
Their unctuous palms over the jingling fame,
Whose ringing chink wins all the world's acclaim.
* * * *
Hast thou the lust to buy? It needs no skill.
They are all venal. Let thy purse be deep,
And let their greedy paws unhindered creep
Into its depths. So let them take their fill,
For if thou dost not offer them enough,
Their "virtue" they'll parade, to hide their huff.
* * * *
They are all virtuous, yea every one.
Virtue and fame are ever in accord
So long as time doth run,

The tongues that prate of virtue as reward
Earn fame. For virtue is fame's clever bawd.

*   *   *   *

Amongst these virtuous, I prefer to be
One guilty of all vile and horrid sin!
And when I see fame's importunity
So advertise her shameless harlotry,
Ambition turns to gall. Amidst such kin
One place alone, the lowest, would I win.
*   *   *   *
This fame, which all the wide world loves,
I touch with gloves,
And scorning beat
Beneath my feet.

3

Hush! I see vastness!—and of vasty things
Shall man be dumb, unless he can enshrine
Them with his words? Then take the might which brings
The heart upon thy tongue, charmed wisdom mine!
*   *   *   *
I look above, there rolls the star-strown sea.
O night, mute silence, voiceless cry of stars!
And lo! A sign! The heaven its verge unbars—
A shining constellation falls towards me.

4

O loftiest, star-clustered crown of Being!
O carved tablets of Eternity!
And dost thou truly bend thy way to me?
Thy loveliness, to all—obscurity,
What? Fear'st not to unveil before *my* seeing?
*   *   *   *
O shield of Destiny!
O carven tablets of Eternity!
Yea, verily, thou knowest—what mankind doth hate,
What I alone do love: thou art inviolate
To strokes of change and time, of fates the fate!
'Tis only thou, O dire Necessity,
Canst kindle everlasting love in me!
*   *   *   *
O loftiest crown of Life! O shield of Fate!
That no desire can reach to invocate,
That ne'er defiled or sullied is by Nay,
Eternal Yea of life, for e'er am I thy Yea:
For I love thee, Eternity!

Fragments Of Dionysus-Dithyrambs

(1882-88)

SPEECHES, PARABLES, AND SIMILES

3

My home's in the highlands,
For the highlands I yearn not,
I raise not mine eyes aloft:
I am one that looks downward,
One that must bless,—All
blessers look downward.

11

Thus I began,
I unlearned all self-pity!

13

Not in shattering idols,
But in shattering the idol-worshipper in thee,
Consisted thy valour.

14

See, there stand
Those heavy cats of granite,
Those old, old Values.
Woe is me! How overthrow them?
* * * *
Scratching cats,
With paws that are fettered,
There they sit
And their glance is poison.

17

A lightning-flash became my wisdom:
With sword of adamant it clove me every
darkness!

19

A thought that still
Flows hot, like lava:
But all streams of lava
Build a fortress around them,
And every thought finally
Oppresses itself with laws.

20

Such is my will:
And since ‘tis my will,
All goes as I wish—
That was my final wisdom:
I willed what I must,
And thus I forced every “must,”—
Since then has been for me no “must.”

23

Deceit
Is war’s whole art
The fox’s skin
Is my secret shirt of mail

25

We of the new underworld
Grub for new treasures.
Godless it seemed to the ancients
To disturb the earth’s bowels for treasures
And once more this godlessness revives,
Hear ye not earth’s bowels thunder?

28

Looking for love and finding masks,
Finding accursed masks and having to break them!

29

Do I love you?
Yes, as the rider loves his steed,
That carryeth him to his goal.

30

His pity is cruel,
His loving hand-clasp bruises,
Give not a giant your hand!

31

Ye fear me?
Ye fear the taut-strung bow?
Ye fear a man might set his arrow to the bow?

33

I am naught but a word-maker.
What matter words?
What matter I?

34

Ah, my friends,
Whither has flown all that is called “good”?
Whither all good people?
Whither the innocence of all these falsehoods?

I call all good,
Leaves and grass, happiness, blessing, and rain.

35

Not through his sins and greatest follies.
Through his perfection I suffered,
As I suffered most from men.[45]

36

“Man is evil.”
So spake the wisest
For my consolement.

37

And only when I to myself am a burden
Do ye fall heavy upon me!

38

Too soon, already
I laugh again:
For a foe ‘tis easy
To make me amends.

39

Gentle am I towards man and chance;
Gentle with all men, and even with grasses:
A spot of sunshine on winter curtains,
Moist with tenderness,
A thawing wind to snow-bound souls:
* * * *
Proud-minded towards trifling
Gains, where I see the huckster’s long finger,
‘Tis aye my pleasure
To be bamboozled:
Such is the bidding of my fastidious taste.

40

A strange breath breathes and spits at me,
Am I a mirror, that straightway is clouded?

41

Little people,
Confiding, open-hearted,
But low-built portals,
Where only the low of stature can enter.
* * * *
How can I get through the city-gate
Who had forgotten to live among dwarfs?

[45] Nietzsche here alludes to Christian perfection, which he considers equivalent to harmlessness.—TR.

42

My wisdom was like to the sun,
I longed to give them light,
But I only deceived them.
The sun of my wisdom
Blinded the eyes
Of these poor bats....

43

Blacker and eviller things didst thou see than ever a seer did:
Through the revels of Hell no sage had ever journeyed.

44

Back! on my heels too closely ye follow!
Back! lest my wisdom should tread on you, crush you!

45

"He goes to hell who goes thy ways!"
So be it I to my hell
I'll pave the way myself with well-made maxims.

46

Your God, you tell me,
Is a God of love?
The sting of conscience
A sting from God?
A sting of love?

48

They chew gravel,
They lie on their bellies
Before little round things,
They adore all that falleth not down—
These last servants of God
Believers (in reality)!

50

They made their God out of nothing,
What wonder if now he is naught?

51

Ye loftier men! There have once been
More thoughtful times, more reflective,
Than is our to-day and to-morrow.

52
Our time is like a sick woman—

Let her but shriek, rave, scold,
And break the tables and dishes!

54

Ye mount?
Is it true that ye mount,
Ye loftier men?

Are ye not, pray,
Like to a ball
Sped to the heights
By the lowest that's in you?
Do ye not flee from yourselves, O ye climbers?

55

All that you thought
You had to despise,
Where you only renounced!

56

All men repeat the refrain!
No, no, and thrice say No!
What's all this yap-yap talk of heaven?
We would not enter the kingdom of heaven,
The kingdom of earth shall be ours?

57

The will redeemeth,
He that has nothing to do
In a Nothing finds food for trouble.

58

You cannot endure it more,
Your tyrannous destiny,
Love it—you're given no choice!

59

These alone free us from woes
(Choose now I)
Sudden death
Or long-drawn-out love.

60

Of death we are sure,
So why not be merry?

61

The worst of pleas
I have hidden from you—that life grew tedious!
Throw it away, that ye find it again to your taste!

62

Lonely days,
Ye must walk on valorous feet!

63

Loneliness
Plants naught, it ripens....
And even then you must have the sun for your friend.

64

Once more must ye plunge in the throng—In the throng ye grow hard and smooth.
Solitude withers
And lastly destroys.—

65

When on the hermit comes the great fear;
When he runs and runs
And knows not whither;
When the storms roar behind
And the lightning bears witness against him,
And his cavern breeds spectres
And fills him with dread.

67

Throw thy pain in the depths,
Man, forget! Man, forget!
Divine is the art of forgetting!
Wouldst fly?
Wouldst feel at home in the heights?
Throw thy heaviest load in the sea!
Here is the sea, hurl thyself in the sea!
Divine is the art of forgetting!

69

Look forward, never look back!
We sink to the depths
If we peer ever into the depths.

70

Beware, beware
Of warning the reckless!
Thy warning will drive them
To leap into every abyss!

71

Why hurled he himself from the heights?
What led him astray?
His pity for all that is lowly led him astray,
And now he lies there, broken, useless, and cold.

72

Whither went he? Who knows?
We only know that he sank.
A star went out in the desolate void,
And lone was the void.

73

What we have not
But need,
We must take.
And so a good conscience I took.

74

Who is there that could bestow right upon thee?
So take thy right!

75

O ye waves,
Wondrous waves, are ye wroth with me?
Do ye raise me your crests in wrath?
With my rudder I smite
Your folly full square.
This bark ye yourselves
To immortal life will carry along.

77

When no new voice was heard,
Ye made from old words
A law:
When life grows stark, there shoots up the law.

78

What none can refute
Ye say must be true?
Oh, ye innocents!

79

Art thou strong?
Strong as an ass? Strong as God?
Art thou proud?
So proud as to flaunt
Unashamed thy conceit?

80

Beware,
And ne'er beat the drum
Of thy destiny I
Go out of the way
From all pom-pom of fame!
*   *   *   *
Be not known too soon!
Be one that has hoarded renown!

81

Wilt thou grasp at the thorns?
Thy fingers must pay.
Grasp at a poniard.

85

Be a tablet of gold,
They will grave upon thee
In golden script.

86

Upright he stands
With more sense of “justice”
In his outermost toe
Than I have in all my head.
A virtue-monster
Mantled in white.

87

Already he mimics himself,
Already weary he grows,
Already he seeks the paths he has trod—
Who of late still loved all tracks untrodden!

Secretly burnt—
Not for his faith,
Rather because he had lost the heart
To find new faith.

88

Too long he sat in the cage,
That runaway!
Too long he dreaded
A gaoler!

Timorous now he goeth his ways,
All things make him to stumble—
The shadow e’en of a stick makes him to stumble.

89

Ye chambers smoky and musty,
Ye cages and narrow hearts,
How could your spirit be free?

90

Narrow souls!
Huckster-souls!

When money leaps into the box
The soul leaps into it too![46]

92

Are ye women,
That ye wish to suffer
From that which ye love?

99

They are cold, these men of learning!
Would that a lightning-flash might strike their food,
And their mouths could learn to eat fire!

101

Your false love
For the past,
A love for the graves of the dead,
Is a theft from life
That steals all the future.
* * * *
An antiquary
Is a craftsman of dead things,
Who lives among coffins and skeletons.

103

Only the poet who can lie
Wilfully, skilfully,
Can tell the truth.

104

Our chase after truth,
Is't a chase after happiness?

105

Truth
Is a woman, no better,
Cunning in her shame:
Of what she likes best
She will know naught,
And covers her face....
To what doth she yield
But to violence?
Violence she needs.
Be hard, ye sages!
Ye must compel her,
That shamefaced Truth....
For her happiness

[46] Alluding to the saying of the Dominican monk Tetzel, who sold indulgences in the time of Luther: "When money leaps into the box, the soul leaps from hell to heaven!"—TR.

She needs constraint—She
is a woman, no better.

106

We thought evil of each other?
We were too distant,
But now in this tiny hut,
Pinned to one destiny,
How could we still be foes?
We must needs love those
Whom we cannot escape.

107

Love thy foe,
Let the robber rob thee:
The woman hears and—does it.

110

A proud eye
With silken curtains,
Seldom clear,
Honours him that may see it unveiled.

111

Sluggard eyes
That seldom love—
But when they love, the levin flashes
As from shafts of gold
Where a dagger keeps guard at the treasure of love.

117

They are crabs, for whom I have no fellow-feeling.
Grasp them, they pinch you;
Leave them alone, and they walk backward.

119

Crooked go great rivers and men,
Crooked, but turned to their goal;
That is their highest courage,
They dreaded not crooked paths.

121
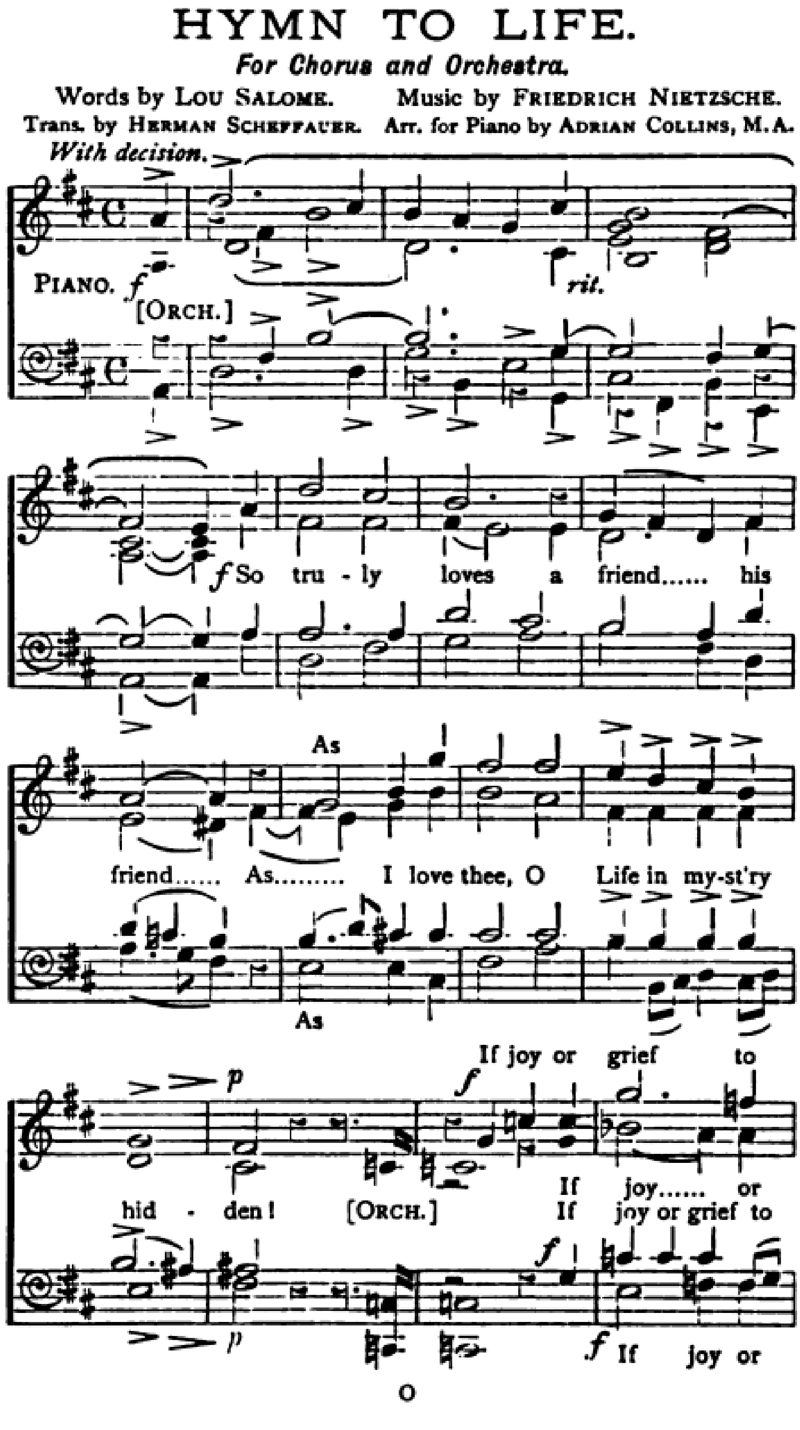
Wouldst catch them?
Then speak to them
As to stray sheep:
“Your path, your path
You have lost!”
They follow all
That flatter them so:
“What? had we a path?”
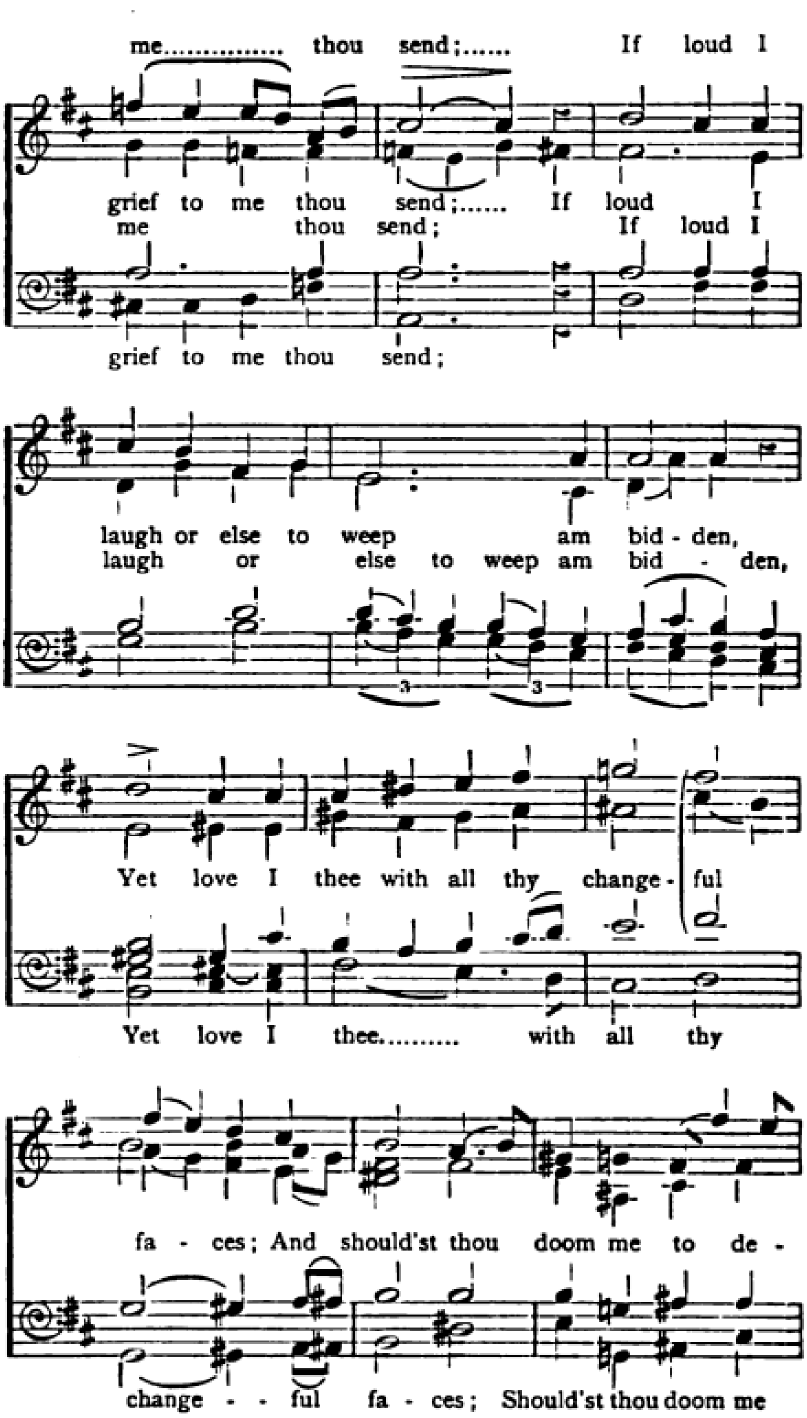
Each whispers the other:
"It really seems that we have a path."
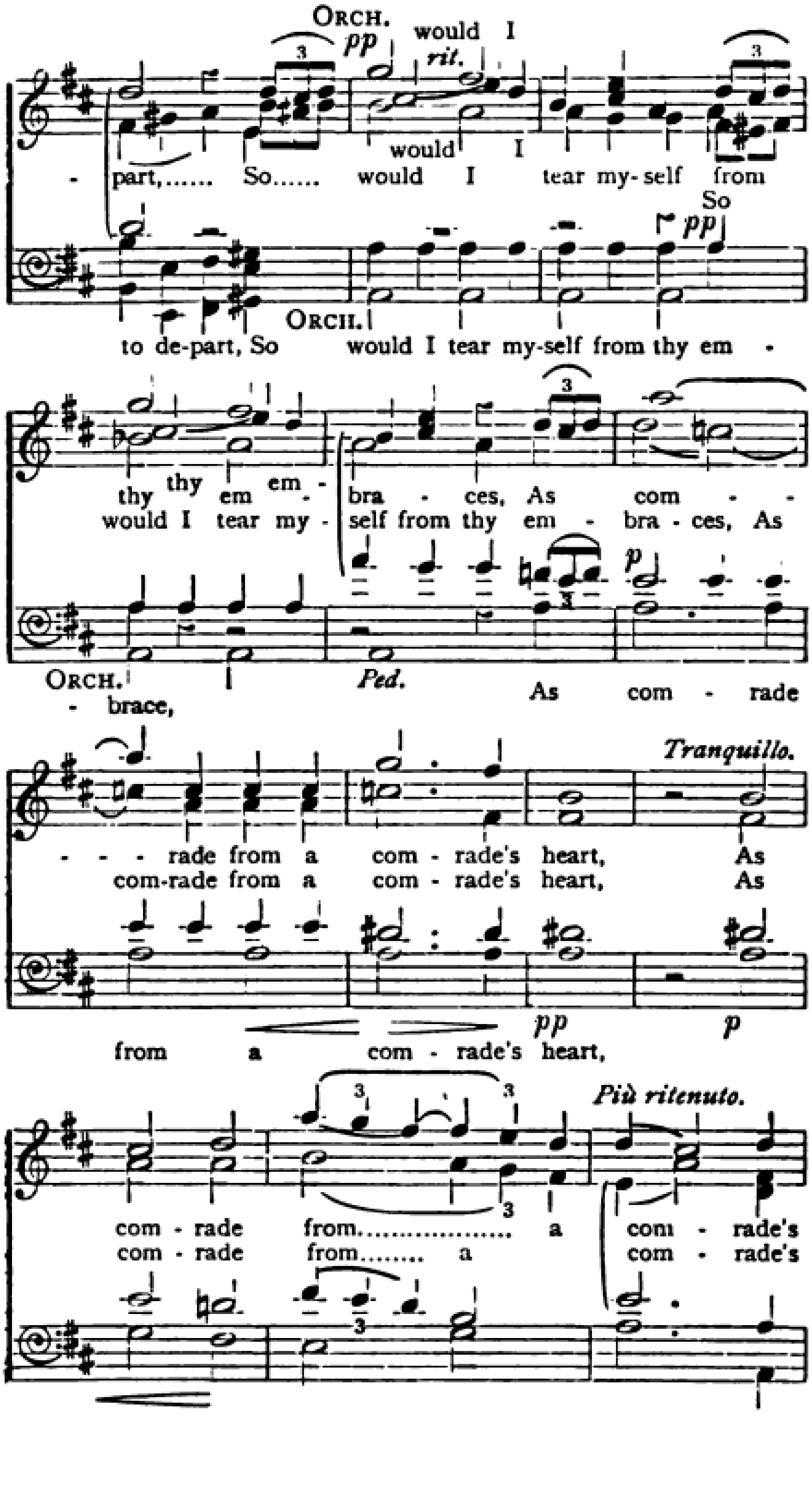
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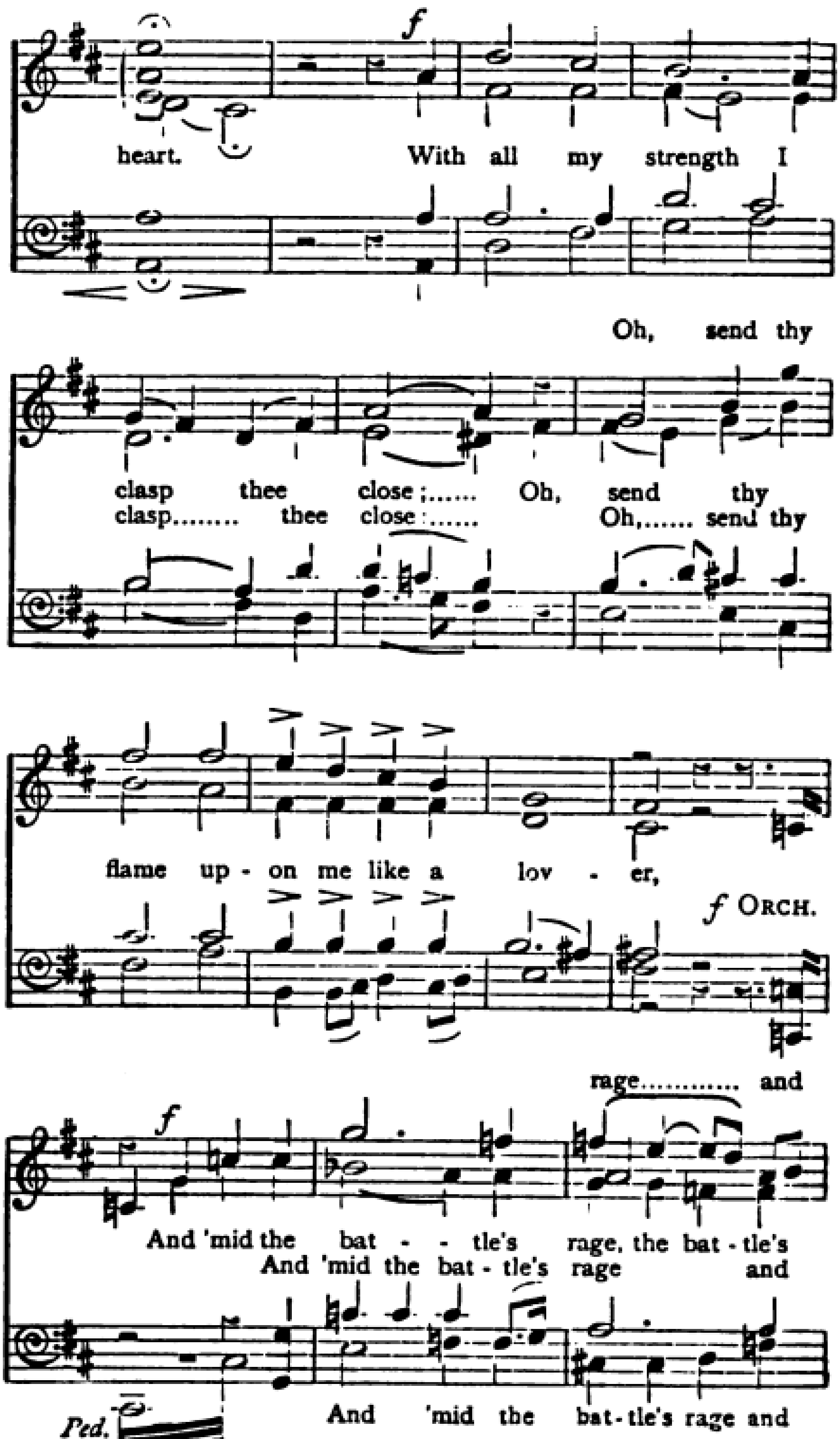
Hymn To Life
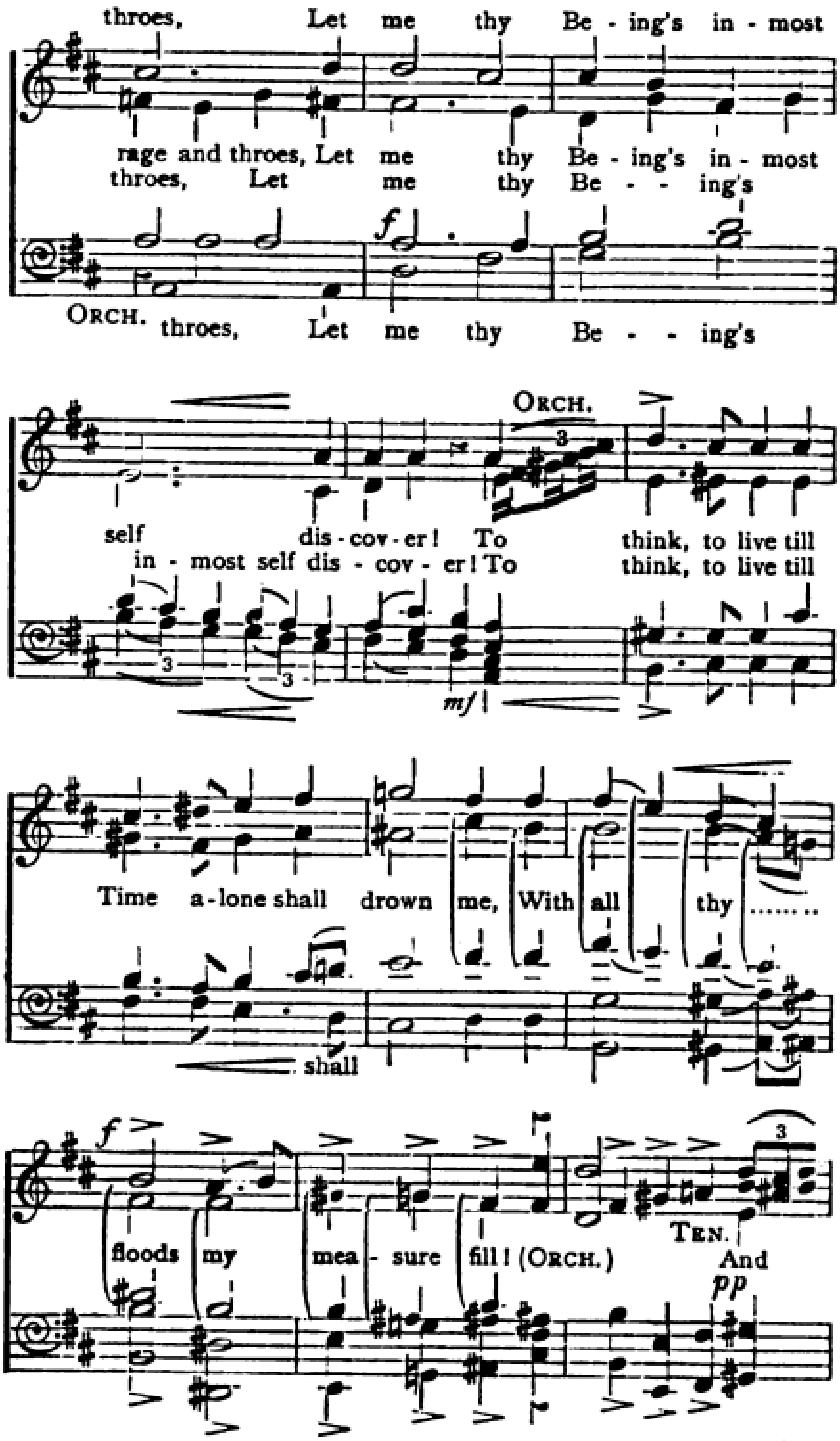
For Chorus and Orchestra. WORDS BY LOU SALOMÉ. MUSIC BY FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE. Trans. BY HERMAN SCHEFFAUER. Arr. for Piano BY ADRIAN COLLINS. M.A.
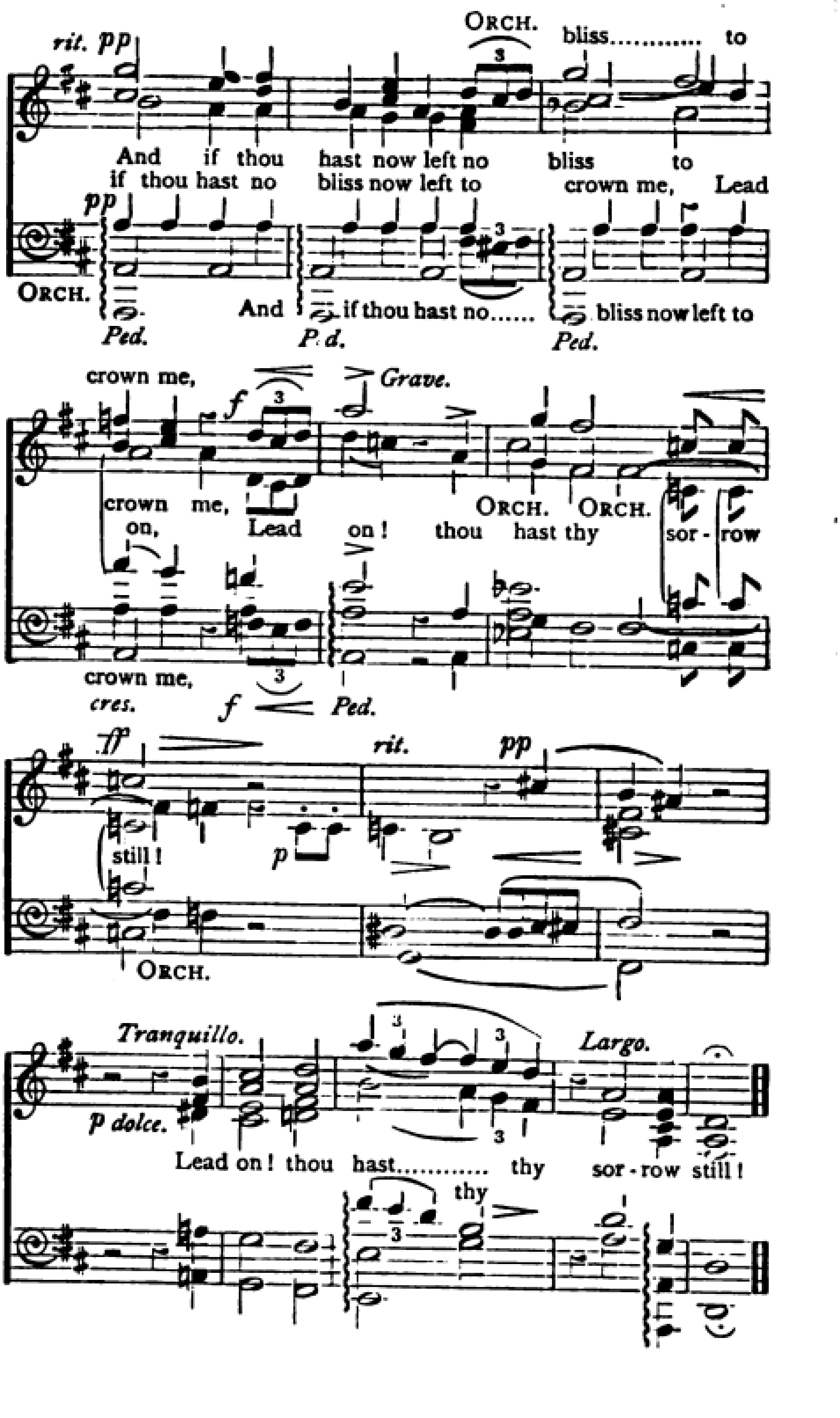



me............... thou send;...... If loud I
grief to me thou send;...... If loud I
me thou send; If loud I
grief to me thou send;
laugh or else to weep am bid - den,
laugh or else to weep am bid - den,
Yet love I thee with all thy change - ful
Yet love I thee.......... with all thy
fa - ces; And should'st thou doom me to de -
change - - ful fa - ces; Should'st thou doom me


Orch.
pp
would I
rit.
would I
- part,...... So...... would I tear my-self from
So
pp
Orch.
to de-part, So would I tear my-self from thy em -
thy thy em em - bra - ces, As com - -
would I tear my - self from thy em - bra - ces, As
p
Orch.
Ped.
- brace,
As com - rade
Tranquillo.
- - - rade from a com - rade's heart, As
com-rade from a com - rade's heart, As
pp
p
from a com - rade's heart,
Più ritenuto.
com - rade from.................. a com - rade's
com - rade from........ a com - rade's


f
heart. With all my strength I
Oh, send thy
clasp thee close ;...... Oh, send thy
clasp........ thee close :...... Oh,...... send thy
flame up - on me like a lov - er,
f ORCH.
rage............ and
f
And 'mid the bat - - tle's rage, the bat - tle's
And 'mid the bat - tle's rage and
Ped.
And 'mid the bat-tle's rage and


throes, Let me thy Be - ing's in - most
rage and throes, Let me thy Be - ing's in - most
throes, Let me thy Be - - ing's
f
ORCH. throes, Let me thy Be - - ing's
ORCH.
self dis - cov - er! To think, to live till
in - most self dis - cov - er! To think, to live till
mf
Time a - lone shall drown me, With all thy ....
shall
f
floods my mea - sure fill! (ORCH.)
TEN. And
pp


rit. pp
Orch.
bliss............ to
And if thou hast now left no bliss to
if thou hast no bliss now left to crown me, Lead
pp
Orch.
And
if thou hast no......
bliss now left to
Ped.
P.d.
Ped.
crown me,
f
Grave.
crown me,
Orch.
Orch.
on, Lead on! thou hast thy sor - row
crown me,
cres.
f
Ped.
ff
rit.
pp
still!
p
Orch.
Tranquillo.
Largo.
p dolce.
Lead on! thou hast............ thy sor - row still!
thy

THE END

****

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